MARCH 2016 #394 $4.99

# MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

SCUMRAID COLD BEAT CLOCKED OUT DARFÜR
THE LANDLORDS UTAH JAZZ CONSTANT INSULT
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES SCENE REPORT

# MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth, here're some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

### GRACE AMBROSE

- STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – Grave City LP
- PIG DNA – Mob Shity LP
- FRENOPATICSS – EP
- PSYCHO SIN – Forward To The Caves! LP + CD
- TOZCOS – Existencia Aturdida EP
- FUMIGADOS – Bobo EP
- KOSZMAR – Wieczny Płomień EP
- A FRAMES – both LPs / PARANOID – Satyagraha LP
- MOMMY – I Remember Them EP
- VIAL – live / CAREER SUICIDE – live

### MATT BADENHOP

- KOHTI TUHOA – Rutiinin Orja LP
- HRDINOVE NOVE FRONTY – Válečný Území LP
- CAREER SUICIDE – live
- NERVOUS TREND – "Shattered / Decency"
- TOZCOS – Existencia Aturdida EP
- FUMIGADOS – Bobo EP
- PARASYTES – Straight Jacket EP
- FRENOPATICSS – EP
- DISSEKERAD – Mörkret Tilltar LP
- G-GAS – Generation Gas LP

### WILL BLOMQUIST

- KOSZMAR – Wieczny Płomień EP
- PARANOID – Satyagraha LP
- ASSASSINATE – Legion EP
- NOUN – Throw Your Body LP
- NO NEGATIVE – The Good Never Comes LP
- NERVOUS TREND – "Shattered/Decency"
- STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – Grave City LP
- WHATEVER BRAINS – LP
- PIG DNA – Mob Shity LP
- TOYOTA / LAIKA'S ORBIT – live

### MITCH CARDWELL

- A FRAMES – LP
- A FRAMES – 2 LP
- PSYCHO SIN – Forward To The Caves! LP + CD
- STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – Grave City LP
- THE UGLY – Off The Hook EP
- MOMMY – I Remember Them EP
- TRADITIONAL FOOLS – Fool's Gold LP
- CRAP DETECTORS – My Generation... LP
- ZIPPER – LP
- SS15 Festival – live

### ROBERT COLLINS

- KOHTI TUHOA – Rutiinin Orja LP
- CHLOROFORM – Beg to Rise Up demo
- PIG DNA – LP / PARASYTES – Straight Jacket EP
- WOLFHOUR – Dead on Arrival LP
- HELLMAISTROZ – Maldición Violenta flexi
- TØRSÖ – Sono Pronta a Morire LP
- THE BLOW INS – demo / PARANOID – Satyagraha LP
- MARRON – Rut LP / CAVE STATE – Scarce EP
- KOSZMAR – Nuklearna Supremacja EP
- SIEGE STOMPERS – demo

### LAYLA GIBBON

- STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – Grave City LP
- PIG DNA – Mob Shity LP
- TRADITIONAL FOOLS – Fool's Gold LP
- MOSS LIME – Chou Frise 10"
- ZIPPER – LP / CRAP DETECTORS – LP
- VIAL – live
- FRENOPATICSS – EP
- PSYCHO SIN – Forward To The Caves! LP + CD
- WHATEVER BRAINS – LP + EP
- TOZCOS – EP / FUMIGADOS – EP

### DAN GOETZ

- DEAD MOON – live
- GENERACION SUICIDA – flexi
- NERVOUS TREND – "Shattered/Decency"
- VIAL – live
- MUCH WORSE – Chronic Instigation LP
- TØRSÖ – Sono Pronta a Morire LP
- ALLERGY – Peace Fuckers flexi
- COMA CLUB – EP
- WHATEVER BRAINS – Punk LP
- DOGTEETH – Possession EP

### GREG HARVESTER

*He's recording a demo...*


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# TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

## KENNY KAOS

- RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS – "Time to Let Her Go" 45
- POSERS – Coppin' in Camden EP
- V/A – Ritmo Selvagem EP
- WHITE MURDER – Form Early LP
- THE HAMILTONS – You're Through EP
- HATE RECORDER – Flinching at the Square Waves EP
- GENERACION SUICIDA – flexi
- THE UGLY – Off The Hook EP
- DOGTEETH – Possession EP
- MOMMY – I Remember Them EP

## CAROLYN KEDDY

- V/A – Ritmo Selvagem EP
- BRAT FARRAR – Being With You That Night EP
- GENERACIÓN SUICIDA – flexi
- HARD SKIN – "The One That Got Away" 45
- WHITE MURDER – Form Early LP
- DEAD CAT STIMPY – Uneasy Grounds CD
- MOMMY – EP / TRADITIONAL FOOLS – LP
- MOSS LIME – Chou Frise 10"
- STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – Grave City LP
- CRAP DETECTORS – My Generation LP

## RAY LUJAN

- HARD SKIN – "The One That Got Away" 45
- INTENSIVE CARE – Hipsters CD
- NERVOUS TREND – "Shattered/Decency"
- PAINTED ZEROS – Floriography LP
- POSERS – Coppin' In Camden EP
- RATS IN THE LOUVRE – LP
- SPENT IDOLS – Land Of The Lost CD
- STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – Grave City LP
- TURKISH TECHNO – Number Two LP
- THE UGLY - Off The Hook EP

## ROTTEN RON READY

*Stuck in traffic on the way home from Lemmy's funeral...*

## FRED SCHRUNK

- MOMMY – I Remember Them EP
- FUMIGADOS – Bobo EP
- TOZCOS – Existencia Aturdida EP
- STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – Grave City LP
- NOUN – Throw Your Body LP
- TENEMENT – The Blind Wink LP
- NERVOUS TREND – "Shattered / Decency"
- HARD SKIN – "The One That Got Away"
- PAINTED ZEROS – Floriography LP
- LAIKA'S ORBIT – live

## LENA TAHMASSIAN

- FRENOPATICSS – EP
- TOZCOS – Existencia Aturdida EP
- KOHTI TUHOA – Rutiinin Orja LP
- NERVOUS TREND – "Shattered / Decency"
- ZIPPER – LP
- BORZOI – Pinnacle EP
- ZEN LUNATICS – Sacred Mountain Blues 12"
- MARRON – Rut LP
- KOSZMAR – Wieczny Płomień EP
- VIAL – live

## ELI WALD

- STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – Grave City LP
- PIG DNA – Mob Shity LP
- VIAL – live
- A FRAMES – both LPs
- PARANOID – Satyagraha LP
- NERVOUS TREND – "Shattered / Decency"
- WHATEVER BRAINS – "An Object" 45
- TOZCOS – Existencia Aturdida EP
- MOSS LIME – Chou Frise 10"
- FRENOPATICSS – EP

## BRENDAN WELLS

- PIG DNA – Mob Shity LP
- A FRAMES – LP
- A FRAMES – 2 LP
- TØRSÖ – Sono Pronta a Morire LP
- WHATEVER BRAINS – "An Object" 45
- STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – Grave City LP
- ELSE ADMIRE & THE BREITENGÜSSBACH DOLLS – LP
- FRENOPATICSS – EP
- V/A – Without Kibou There Is Nothing Vol. 4 EP
- SILENT ORDER – Distraction EP


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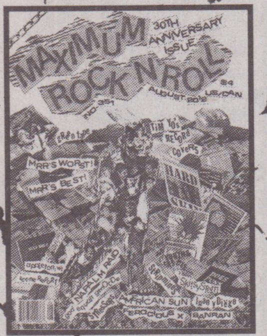
# BACK ISSUES / SUBSCRIPTIONS / RENEWALS

**LIKE WHAT YOU'RE READING IN *MRR* #394?**
**RECOMMENDED READING FROM THE MRRchive:**

### MRR #337/June '11

A **BUFFALO, NY scene report** for those who didn't get enough in this issue's UTAH JAZZ interview. Plus: John Morton of ELECTRIC EELS and X_X, Destroy All Movies!!! writers/editors Zack Carlson and Bryan Connolly, Finnish hardcore champs YDINPERHE, crust punk NUX VOMICA, Oakland mutants UZI RASH, SoCal psyche-punks WHITE FENCE, Swedish garage stompers BLACK FEET, Russian activist "Vanya Kostolom" Khutorskoy (RIP), '80s New Orleans HC flyer archive From Stapleguns to Thumbtacks.




### MRR #351/Aug '12

Members of South Korea's **BANRAN** interview SCUMRAID in #394, and you can read their own interview here! Also: 30th Anniversary Issue special, including USHC teens STRESSORS, NAPALM RAID from Canada, L.A.'s GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE, Swedish HC legends SKITSYSTEM, AMERICAN SUN from NYC, NC's STRIPMINES, FEROCIOUS X from Japan, Colombian artists Juan y Diëgo, and an Appleton, WI scene report.

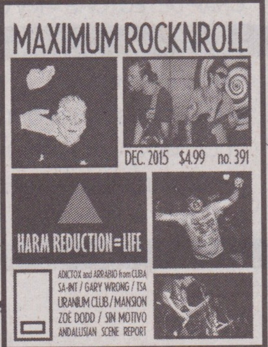
### MRR #352/Sep '12

As it turns out, MPLS punks CONSTANT INSULT (intreviewed in #394) met at a **FROZEN TEENS** show—read more about them here. Plus: Singapore's VAARALLINEN, LUTA ARMADA from São Paulo, Japanese Noise-Core Roundtable, Japanese noise-core punks STAGNATION, the DIPERS from NYC, Bay Area queer punks ALABASTER CHOAD, Chicago's GRITOS DE RESISTENCIA, BRAIN SLUG from NYC, Swedish D-beat ragers KVOTERINGEN, Seattle melodic crust punx KOHOSH, Support New York support group, and crossover/thrash metal book Murder in the Front Row.

**RECENT BACK ISSUES:**
**MRR's Latest and Greatest**

### MRR #390/Nov '15

AS MERCENÁRIAS from Brazil, Toronto's Not Dead Yet festival, OBNOX out of Ohio, SBSM from Oakland, Edmonton's STRANGLED, Chicago's own POPULATION, PDX rockers EMASCULATOR, Chatanooga's Do Ya Hear We? fest, NJ/Bay Area pop-punkers PARASITES, plus photos from the opening of DIY Space for London and Springfield, IL's Dumb Fest 3D.




### MRR #391/Dec '15

The MINNEAPOLIS URANIUM CLUB BAND, GARY WRONG from Alabama, Fort Worth's SIN MOTIVO, SA-INT from Finland, Oakland's MANSION, first ever Cuban band interview with ARRABIO and ADICTOX, San Francisco's TSA, an interview with activist Zoë Dodd, photo spreads from All Punks Go For It and Not Dead Yet 2015, and an Andalusia scene report.

### MRR #392/Jan '16

BLANK SPELL from Philadelphia, Oakland's ANDY HUMAN, G.L.O.S.S. tour diary, East Anglian hardcore from VOLUNTEERS, S.H.I.B.G.B.'s retrospective, Detroit's Salinas Records, Beirut's TEX FOX, one-man band from New Orleans ROOM 101, photo spreads from Static Shock Weekend and Austin's Collective Delusion/Mass Hysteria exhibition, Still Not Quiet on the Western Front fest announcement.

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# LETTERS

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*MRR*,

I'm writing to you from SCI Forest. I have over 40 years left on a 46–92 year sentence for a crime I committed while under the influence of multiple drugs I had a problem with, and I am not proud of what I did. The days go by pretty much the same, some are better than others, and of course there are a lot of times when you battle bouts of severe depression and shame.

One thing that I always missed the most was my music. At my last prison there was a local college radio station from Cal U, MCAL, and they had some pretty amazing DJs who had great shows featuring all types of music. When I was transferred here, I lost that amazing connection to the one thing that helped make the days better, as there is no station here that plays anything like them. But now the PA DOC has made the decision to sell tablets that are only able to download music from this company's (Global Tel*Link) library. The tablets cost $150, and all songs are $1.91 each. It's pretty steep, but at the same time, music can make such a huge difference in your life. The selection is surprisingly good, and I listen to a very diverse range of music. They have everything from Eyehategod, Conflict, No Ca$h, and Infest to Blitz, Fifteen, Deltron3030, Dangers, Hüsker Dü, Burzum, Dystopia, the Boils, the Pist, etc.

I am writing to see if it is possible for more bands or labels to make their music available on this service. I was trying to find Crass, Blatz, Filth, Pissed Jeans, Madball, and Minor Threat, along with some other bands, and either found nothing by them or only a couple songs off of compilations. Please, if you are able to, get the word out to people to try and get more music available. Music can really make your life better, and it was probably the brightest moment of my last six years when these became available to us. Being able to hear my friends' bands and new music, along with old favorites, is so amazing—it's hard to get depressed when you have music to brighten your day.

Well, *MRR*, keep being awesome. And to anyone in a basement at a show, drink one for me. Much love to everyone.

Stephen Benford
DC# JX2138
Unit C-B-2045
SCI Forest, PO Box 945
Marienville, PA 16239

*Hi Stephen,*

*Thanks for writing in. We'll certainly investigate making music released by MRR available on this system—though we wish there was a way it could be free to everyone on the inside! We're going to call Global Tel*Link and find out what the process for uploading music is. We'll share it here for the punks.*

*— Grace*

Dear *Maximum Rocknroll* and readers,

This letter is available in a very limited edition of 132 copies—some on green paper, some on pink, a few on yellow, and even less on red. Five copies on glossy paper. Sit back, have a drink, then sell it.

Message? What message? Spread the news, use the newest social media, and force the people to subscribe.

Click to download your ideology! All for free! Most of the time we all seem to be neighbours 'cos we live at ".com". That's cool in a way, thinking we all live just across the road to each other. Yet still, when you think about visiting someone, you start to wonder where the hell .com actually is! The moral of the story? Punk belongs to the businesses, not the punks anymore.

Dunno if this makes sense to anyone, I just felt the need to share my thoughts about something that has been part of my life since 1977. It makes my safety pin heart bleed to see what people do in the name of punk. I thought this was against the establishment, but it looks like an underground establishment is all we got, like a mirror of society. I'm thinking of what I see on Discogs and e-bay—making big money with punk, records that are hyped in the pages of *MRR*. I think about the folks at *MRR* who get paid *nothing* for all their work. It's like two separate universes.

I guess the old days are over and done. I still have a little hope left that things could move two steps back, kick out all the bloody business making, and get back to honest DIY. Anyway, keep up the great work at *MRR*, and (not) sorry to anyone I offended.

Pablo Van Paz
Biel/Bienne, Switzerland, Earth

P.S. RIP Dickie Hammond. Contrary to most, I seem to remember him most for being in HDQ, whom I had the pleasure to see once in Zürich—great gig!

P.P.S. RIP Tony Van Frater. Tony was in Red Alert and, like Dickie, played in almost all the northeastern English bands.

P.P.P.S. RIP Filip Fuchs—Mrtvá Budoucnost, See You in Hell, Hluboká Orba Records and zine, and *MRR* contributor. I met Filip once, or rather, he came to see me. See You in Hell played in town, and I couldn't go to see them due to my tinnitus. The diamond geezer walked all the way to my house and back to have a talk and trade some records!

Way too many good folks go too soon, but are sure to be remembered!

**CORRECTIONS:**

*It's TWIN TRANCES, not TWIN TRACES; it's UFUX not AFAX. Sorry. Though, as of this writing, neither of the records in question are on Discogs. So do they even exist?*

*We're looking for help in the transcription department, both typing up recorded interviews and retyping some old pages of the magazine. If you can help, get in touch: mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. Shitworking fame and glory await...*

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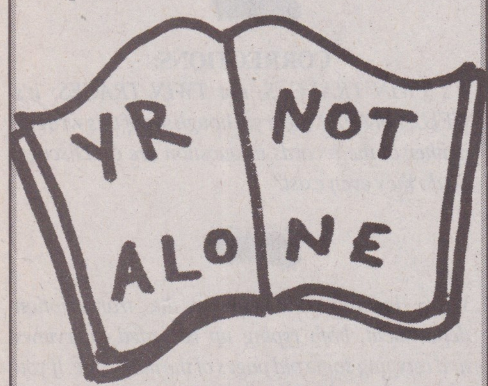


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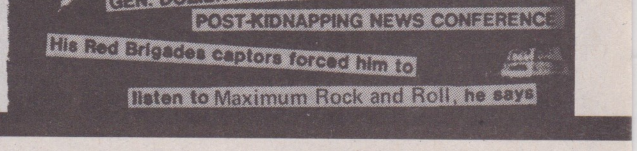


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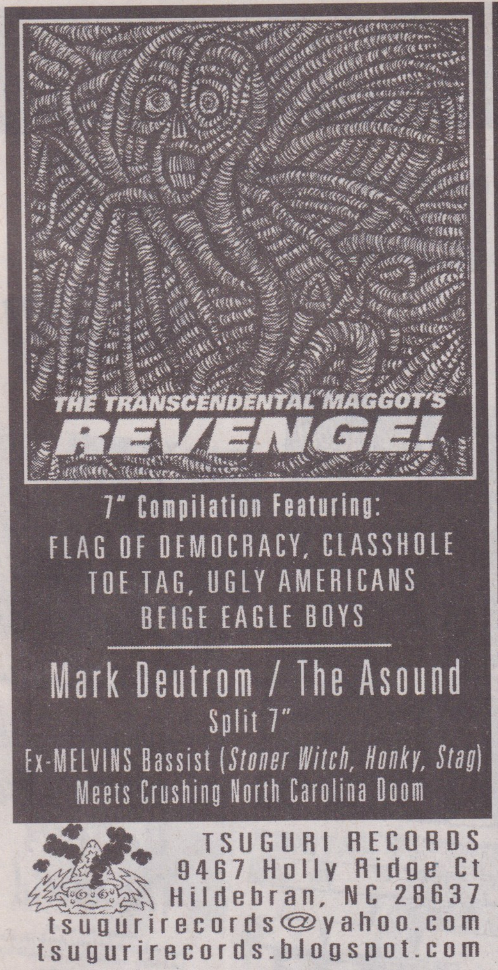
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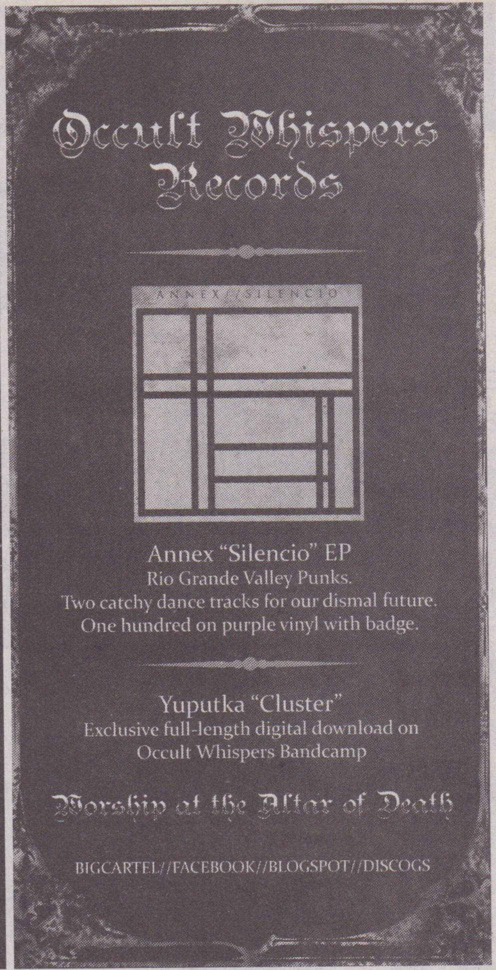
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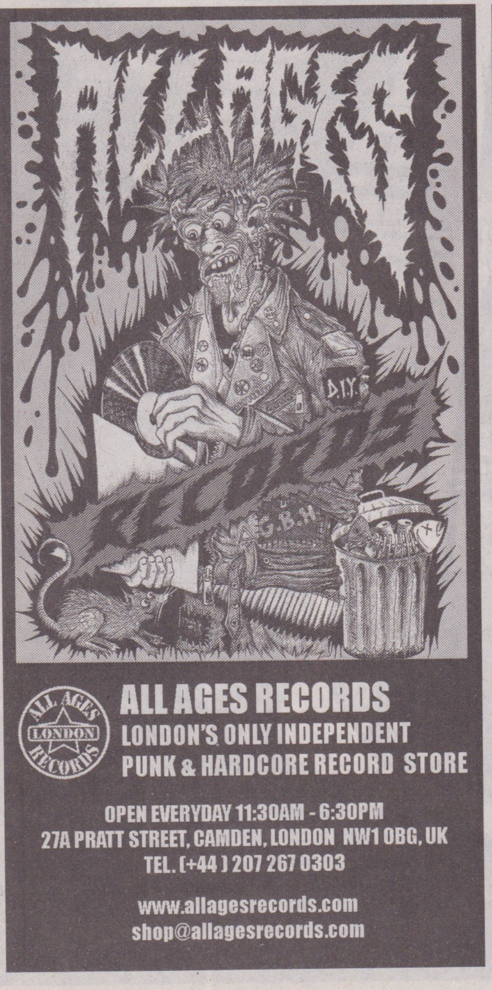
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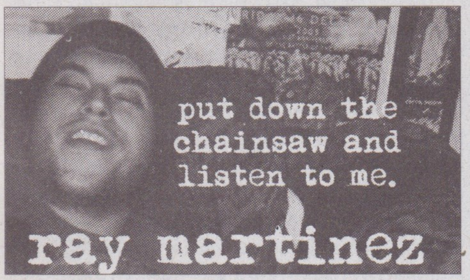



This is it.

My last column for *MRR*.

I've been pink-slipped, booted, laid off, downsized. The head honchos have let me know that they're "in the process of restructuring the columns section" and "would like to discontinue [my] column."

To be honest, I'm more surprised this didn't come earlier. Like, when they gave me the boot as a coord over a year ago. Which goes to show just how interesting things are behind the scenes as Ye Olde Holy Bible of Punk Rock. I'm actually kinda glad that they're cutting out some writers in the zine, cause frankly, you gotta trim to keep growing. And I'll be the first to admit that I'm bad with deadlines, and write annoying as fuck emails to editors. Plus, I've got *No Friends* now. And like that drummer who decides to play in both touring bands, one of the performances is often less stellar than the other.

Writing for this zine has been a dream come true. I wrote probably a dozen guest columns from 1997–2005 that I never sent in cause I was afraid they would be too stupid. When I got the coordinator spot I actually tried to find out if I could just *not* write a column—I just didn't think anyone would care and it would be a waste space and everyone's time. Then when it came time, I banged my first one out in the kitchen of Dead Rat Beach in Oakland. And then I saw it in print, and I felt, for the first time, really proud of something I did in punkrockland. It was a hard thing to do and a difficult hurdle to jump but after that it's been incredibly positive and gave me a nice big megaphone to espouse my batshit ideas and semi-coherent ramblings. I've also been able to connect, on a really personal level, with people around the world in a way that I never would have before.

I cannot even begin to overstate how important my time at this rag was in my creating *No Friends*. All good punk music zines rip off *MRR*. All great punk music zines are reactions to being a part of/or being excluded from *MRR*. Or a combination of the two.

I hope I can keep up the legacy.

Since this my last column I just wanna personally thank, in print, Mariam Bastani, Ari Perezdiez, Lydia Athanasopoulos, Diana Vashti, Francesca Foglia, and Grace Ambrose for being awesome coordinators to work under. I'm a *fucking difficult* person, and these people are goddamn heroes.

I guess I'm just gonna have to get all Karl Bakla and start sending in long-ass letters.

Being a constant part of this magazine means more to me than anything else I've ever done, and it's amazing to have been a part of a long legacy of loudmouths.

My door prize for it all is the ability to have my own quarterly DIY music fanzine and know that the models I'm aping are the ones that have worked for decades. It feels alright being the younger sibling of a zine you can respect and look up to.

So if you wanna keep reading my bullshit, pick up a copy of *No Friends*.

Also, keep in mind that any of you idiots, assholes, and armchair coordinators reading this can jam 1000-2000 words on your keyboard and send in a column.

Look at this bullshit waste of space I just got away with.

You can do it too!

And isn't that the whole fucking point?!

So go for it.

*MRR still rules, OK?!*

*Ralph Rivera is the newest* MRR *columnist. He runs Not Normal Tapes and Records and sings in the Bug.*

**LOVE IN THE LOWER THIRD**

Look, chief, I have no illusions about punk. I know we're all socially awkward, hopelessly underemployed, woefully unmotivated thirteen to thirty-somethings with bad breath, bad credit, bad taste, and bad fashion sense. If you're still reading this magazine and this column, you've irrevocably squandered thousands of seconds better spent resumé building or, quite honestly, rolling a respectable, good-not-great two-twenny-one for your daddy's bowling team. Many have done, will do, and are doing just that. As for the rest of you listless, lipless bastards, the True Believers, let's talk.

I touched on this in my 2016 Year End Top Ten, a riveting, bombastic exercise in blowhardiness and pedantry I'm *positive* you'll all have read, but punk is hardly consistent. Five years, five months, five minutes onward, the collective attention will have shifted. For every outfit that will have left a lasting impression there are scores of imitators, your ever so subtle SHAMs, LARGE EXCRESCENCEs, and FRUMPY & THE GRUMPERSs that will have reverted back to YOUTH VIOLENCE or perhaps ascended to a degree of musical maturity in direct correlation to the starchy stiffness of their raw denim jeans. During the recovery period between the Last and Next Big Things, that attention invariably refocuses upon certain hallowed places, but for a subculture that pays so much lip service to underground agitators and outliers, it is interesting how often we remain ignorant of the fecund bursts of energy and ingenuity lurking in the cracks and crevices of this world, to say nothing of the hard work and planning preceding these peculiar slivers of space time. To wit, while thankfully much well-earned praise has been heaped at the altar of BIG ZIT, CCTV, CONEHEADS, et al., it can't be ignored that a thriving scene existed in Northwest Indiana for many years before the inception of these outfits, a scene that often met and exceeded the standards set in Chicago, the -urb to its sub-. I'd stake a first press FIX EP that this is far from a solitary occurrence when extrapolated to a national scale.

"So Ralph, is your commitment to the insidious *Maximum Rocknroll* administrative agenda of PC Hate Vision so unyielding that you would suggest that young, impressionable punkers are *never* to acknowledge the sonic supremacy of this nation's metropoli, the likes of which only Cleveland or New York City could yield?" Would I say that? Yes. Have I said that? Without question. Am I saying that now? Absolutely not. I'm not so cynical and elitist to suggest that nothing of value ekes itself into existence outta the garbage-strewn, $15-cups-of-artisan-coffee-shoppe lined streets of NYC; anyone who's heard IN SCHOOL or

DEFORMITY knows this to be an untenable lie. I do question the validity of that supremacy and the widely accepted paradigm of traveling between Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Philly, and NYC with Toronto, DC, or Boston as the rotating fifth, this notion that everything in between and outside of that exalted pentagon is dead space. I can't abide this idea that we've dropped out of high schools and colleges worldwide, waited tables and delivered pizzas, continuously taken expendable positions at jobs express made to be walked out of, and hastened the parabolic arching of our backs five nights outta seven for this to be the extent of our vision. Should we not enjoy the full range of opportunities that our myriad failures and shortcomings have presented? So, the truth? If living in squalor for the sake of "art" can somehow be justified, then follow through, because anything less runs the risk of missing out on the unparalleled love and enthusiasm to be found in the lower third of these United States.

***

We booked a fucking tour. Not an altogether novel concept, nor the most efficient or financially sound cure for homeborn ennui, but a necessary one. The first week mostly served to reaffirm pre-existing knowledge, an excuse to pal around with like-minded idiots in familiar haunts. It was at the beginning of our second week, when fatigue gives way to either fistfights or revelation, that we truly found the latter.

I originally hesitated to include Richmond, a city whose rich and widely lauded hardcore history causes it to fall outside the scope of this diatribe, but I've always felt it's a town that struggles needlessly beneath its own shadow. The talent and infrastructure exists to support a scene, but the bulk of the joint's post-No Way output has amounted to little more than Clevo-lite schlock, given to the sort of macho posturing rock begets without roll, content to punctuate their speech with epithets and invectives, but never so committed as to toss a quarter stick into a crowd aching to suffer.

This was a different Richmond than the one I remember, chronologically and philosophically removed enough to build a legacy all its own. KOMMUNION dropped off just a few days prior to the show and was replaced by NOSEBLEED. NYHC-worship at its absolute finest, NOSEBLEED eschews the overproduction and street-tough affectations that plague this variety of hardcore nowadays, and instead evoke vibes more akin to late '80s ABC No Rio stalwarts CITIZEN'S ARREST or even LIFE'S BLOOD. BLACKBALL is Richmond's favorite urban legend. The rumors and whispers of devastation unprecedented surrounding this band were confirmed terribly true this night. I was very excited to finally see CHRISTI live, having spun their phenomenal debut single "Cry" endlessly. Despite excluding that crucial cut from their setlist, they did not disappoint, and their blend of '60s pop à la the RONETTES with the CIGARETTES' mod-punk cool offered a welcome break from the barrage preceding them.

When given the choice between a name-brand in Raleigh or a fun time in Greensboro, we opted for the latter to find it was greatly undersold. Oh, Greensboro!, you incestuous cesspool of punk rock filth. Note these names, philistine, that you might be spared come the reckoning: DRUGCHARGE, sexed-up freak beat; HOLDER'S SCAR, heirs to the DEATHREAT legacy; WRIGGLE, the moody middle child; BAD ERIC, burly cavemen dancing the tupa-tupa; MENTHOL, the eighth day Hail Mary, the convergence of all known energies into a swaggering, rock'n'roll avatar that pretenders universe-wide are left to lust after. A pretentious buncha musos from the nation's capital notwithstanding, this was the high point of tour thus far. We got firsthand knowledge of DRUGCHARGE and BAD ERIC's sonic savagery and witnessed BLACKBALL level a room for the second night in a row. The assembled Carolinians formed a writhing mass that jerked and swayed in tandem in that buckling, sweat-sogged living room for the duration of the evening, a testament to the supportive and welcoming nature intrinsic to the town. "Gooble gobble," indeed. A group of us wound down philosophizing (see: shit-talking) around a bonfire while some stragglers gave each other stick-n-pokes to a SISTERS OF MERCY LP played at forty-five, an alteration that makes their melancholic whining infinitely more palatable.

Our good friend JT, a Chicago expat, was itching to show us around their new digs, so we woke up early for our trip to Asheville, post-liberal haven of Appalachia, bastion of commercialized radicalism, where the chickens run free-range and the children are raised still umbilically attached. The town proper, however, is more of a blemish than it is indicative of the grandeur of the surrounding areas. Growing up amongst Midwestern cornfields and stripmalls, it is easy to live ignorant of the unquantifiable beauty still tucked away in ever-shrinking pockets of the country. We sat above a waterfall, Grego got high while I contemplated my big "I" insignificance in a way unknown since the Duck Incident, then we trekked back to town for the show. The venue's bathroom, we came to find, doubled as the area's preeminent collection of pubic hair and coagulated urine. MONDAYS opened and, as they mangled through their ten-minute set, I started thinking about how important failure is to the punk rock canon. These kids, truly kids, endeavored towards something along the lines of SEA OF SHIT or SEX PRISONER, but in the absence of hype or pretense, came away with something much more interesting and urgent than the banal drippings of those aforementioned dung heaps. JT's new band NO APPROACH played next, and I was anxious to finally hear what they'd been up to since moving down south. Absolutely everyone, from your New Balance Dunk wearers to your jaded, Hitler Youth-coifed New Yorkers, will relate how preciously the B-side of *My War* nestles in their hearts. Ignoring the fact that you couldn't possibly ascertain that delineation streaming the record off Spotify, that sentiment is a clichéd and empty one, indicative of a need to project a pompous, esoteric understanding of hardcore punk, and a blight on punk journalism as a whole. But, goddamn myself, NO APPROACH really does recall the best moments of that record, as well as the STAINS (LA), and this set remains one of my favorites of 2015.

The next morning was spent chucking rocks down a mountain in silent hope a chunk might break off and connect with a car passing on the highway below. Arriving in Atlanta with about six hours to spare, we passed time rifling through overpriced records before getting accosted by the septuagenarian hipster owner for loitering out front mere minutes after making a purchase. Living in an era that has ubiquitized knowledge (an overwhelmingly positive development, I'll concede) and made stimulation a constant, it can be hard to maintain the degree of regional identity typically associated with the '80s, but Atlanta overcame the base human drives for sleep and sustenance to carve out a space for itself in an oversaturated world. The venue was a warehouse/art space right on the main drag downtown and seemed to serve as a hub for the town's palpable creative energy; everyone seems to have their hands in some project. Members of WYMYN'S PRYSYN and NURSE reconfigure themselves into UNIFORM and countless other side projects, while some former Texans just started the bratty, angular PROWLER. The art of Josh Feigert graces almost every flier in town. WYMYN'S PRYSYN lives in a world of contrasts, bad vibes laid over deep grooves, guitars screeching and wailing over the catchiest hooks imaginable, while the aesthetic is a confluence of stark, off-kilter collage work and vibrant graffiti handled by Josh. NURSE, in a word: menacing. It wasn't a carefully contrived display, there was no scowling or posing at just the right moments, they were just there and that was enough to make my skin crawl. Their bleak, minimal approach fits nicely alongside the nightmarish output of DESTINO FINAL and their forebears INVASION.

Next month: *DEEP TROUBLE IN DEEP FLORIDA.*

*anyonecanbethebug@gmail.com*

This month I talked to Paul Messis, the singer, guitarist, and songwriter from the Suburban Homes. For those not in the know, the Suburban Homes are an English band with two 7"s out. The first one came out on Paul's label, Market

Square, while the second was released by Total Punk in the US. Pretty fitting, as the Suburban Homes are one of those bands you can't really label anything other than *punk*. I mean sure, they sometimes vaguely sound like a more *Killed By Death/Bloodstains* inspired Television Personalities, or like one of these *Messthetics*/UKDIY bands that only released three and a half songs before vanishing in collector's obscurity, and yeah, they also vaguely remind me of *the* best song by Hygiene ("29 Bus," of course), but at the end of the day, punk is what it is. It ain't hardcore, it ain't Oi!, and it sure as hell ain't crust or bloody "weird punk." Their songs are called "DIY," "Conformity in the UK," and "Pseudo-Intellectuals." Their guitar sound is both the simplest and the sickest, and the nonchalance of those vocals? That's some anti-melodramatic gold, boys and girls, and fans of the Saints, or any of the aforementioned bands, should go on, read this interview, and start a band that doesn't suck.

**MRR: Hey Paul, do you live in a suburban home? Tell us about your town, what's life like over there, etc. Should a French tourist such as myself come and visit?**
Yeah! I still live in a suburban home with my old folks. The town the band was formed in is Crawley West Sussex, it is one of the most depressing places to be based—it's basically a new-town. New-towns were made after the war to rehome London's bombed. They saw it as a fresh start, but it just turned to shit, really.

Crawley is only 30 miles from London, but there is nothing here at all. All the buildings are dull and grey, the only real work is industry work or jobs at Gatwick Airport...I wouldn't recommend visiting Crawley or even London. Hell, I wouldn't even recommend visiting the UK, it's a cultural wasteland at the moment, total Shitsville.

**MRR: Is the band name a reference to the Descendents? Probably not, but just thought I'd make sure.**
No, the band isn't named after the Descendents track, although I do love the debut Descendents LP. The title of the band is more aimed at evoking the idea of the dull and boring; obviously, where I'm located, I can't help but see Suburbia everywhere I turn...So it's more inspired by my surroundings.

**MRR: When and why did you start the Suburban Homes? Was the initial impetus to start a *Messthetics/Bloodstains Across England* type band? Or just to play electric versions of your folk-rock songs?**
The Suburban Homes began life in 2014. Right away, I knew I wanted to do true UK-style DIY punk. My favorite genres of music are '60s garage and KBD punk. I already play '60s garage music, but it's hard to get my anger and frustration across as outwardly and to the point as I can do with Suburban Homes, so I wanted to start a separate project in order to literally vomit my guts out and tell the world some home truths.

The UK is in a bit of a state, musically. No one else is doing this kind of music, so I felt I needed to do it. Since then I've found groups like Quango, Good Throb, and their related bands, but even these groups aren't doing the *Messthetics* stuff as authentically. It does please me greatly that these bands exists now in the UK, despite the fact that none of us will get any exposure or kudos in music magazines or radio.

**MRR: How hard was it finding fellow bandmates where you live? Do you ever play live?**
It's been impossible to find musicians here at all. The current rhythm section of the Suburban Homes live in Kent which is 70 miles away. They consist of Martin on bass and Andy H, who's an old-timer on the punk scene. Andy begun to play drums for us recently. If he didn't decide to help us out, there would've be no more Suburban Homes after the first EP.

We don't play live, because no one here really cares. We've been offered US gigs, but it's impossible to get the time off work and actually make it a reality. I doubt the Suburban Homes will last much longer, if truth be told.

Playing live in the UK has become really depressing. The sound systems they now use in venues sound totally dogshit, the people who tend to go to shows don't really "get" the music, and well...There is no point, really. It's a waste of time. Playing a show in London today is more of an ego boost for the promoter than for the band themselves.

**MRR: You also play solo under the Paul Messis moniker, which I assume is your real name. Tell us a bit about that. When did you start, and are you famous in your town? How different is the songwriting process for this and for the Suburban Homes?**
I've been doing '60s garage style recordings since 2009 under my own name. I basically write and record songs in the '60s garage mold, including folk rock, psychedelia, fuzz punkers, moody minor chord, etc. This music is pretty melodic for the most part, but there is an underlying punk feel, especially in the lyrics and mood. I've always been an outsider, so the lyrics always point to those themes.

In a way my solo stuff acts more as a means to be a bit like Jonathan Richman and let out some of my sadder, more introverted feelings and showcase the more sublime aspects of my songwriting style. The Suburban Homes, however, is a project where I literally need to just tell all the pricks in the world to *fuck off* and *die*. They're two totally different projects—the only tie is that I am involved in them both.

The Suburban Homes is a totally different animal. With the 'Homes, I can pretty much turn up, smash the guitar, and record in a couple of takes. It's very loose and really very enjoyable for me, whereas with the '60s stuff, it takes me forever to come up with guitar parts and play the instruments well enough to be 100% pleased with it and for it to not sound terrible. I am not a great instrument player, so with the '60s stuff I often concentrate very hard and it exhausts me, 'cos I am totally trying my best all the time. With the Suburban Homes, I pretty much play as I normally would do in my bedroom. Both projects, however, are recorded completely lo-fi on an 8-track cassette tape, and I think this is important in order to get an authentic sound. With the Suburban Homes, each of the recordings we've done have been recorded slightly different each time, which is great, 'cos experimenting with recording is enjoyable for me.

I am not famous around my town, because no one really gives a shit, but it's cool—I'd hate to be famous. I believe pretty much all famous people are dicks.

**MRR: Your website states that "Paul Messis is the only musician today *not* to be featured in *The Guardian* Newspaper's 'New Band of the Day' feature." What's the story here? Any beef with the good ol' *Guardian*?**
*The Guardian* used to do a thing called "New Band of the Day," where they would promote new music in the UK daily. They never once approached any interesting bands or individuals who have actual songs that say something about society. It was always comic book hipster bands. The UK music press in general are a bunch of limp-wristed pricks, and I can take it or leave it really. The comment on my website is just a way to try and make myself laugh. I actually forgot I wrote it until you reminded me. Regards to the media in general: *Don't believe it!!!*

**MRR: How did you hook up with Total Punk?**
Rich from Total Punk contacted me to buy some of the debut Suburban Homes E.P. I knew straightaway in dealing with Rich that he was a kindred spirit. The guy is great, and I hold a lot of respect for him. He's one of the few true music guys left today. The guy knows the score and runs probably one of the best record labels in America right now. I'm glad we have been asked to be a part of it.

**MRR: Tell us about Market Square Records.**
Market Square Records is my own little 7" label. I run it like a hobby, really. Each 45 pretty much pays for the next one. So far I've released twelve 45s, and there is more to come. The label pretty much releases '60s inspired bands, punk rock, power pop, some indie, some mod. There is no real musical identity as such, I just like releasing stuff which resonates with me at the time and bands I think deserve to have a 7" vinyl with their name on it.

All the folks I've released so far have been super genuine people. Although not musically "punk," many of the people I've released have been way more punk in spirit than some of the most clichéd rock'n'roll bands have been. The releases have all been by folks who love their music and who are passionate for their songs. So far in my dealings with many of the artists, they have been some of the nicest people I have

interacted with.

I am planning a handful of new 45 releases this year. I would like to get more punk bands on the label, but I'm always on the lookout for new music to release when I can, so if there is a teenage kid reading this who makes great music that no one gives a shit about, please send it my way for consideration: marketsquarerecords@yahoo.co.uk

Market Square is also the only current record label not on Facebook or Twitter. I am more proud of this than anything, because I've essentially proven you don't need social media to sell records. I run my label like an indie label from the '80s—I send out promo leaflets, I send promo CD's to places, I email people individually, I make press releases, etc. It's fun for me. I enjoy doing it. As I mentioned above, the UK is dead culturally at the moment, so starting something like a DIY label which released a wide range of cool music from different genres is kind of unusual for this country in this day and age, especially considering I am not even living in a big city. I am from a small *hick* town that sucks.

**MRR: What's the story with In The Red releasing a Suburban Homes LP? Is that gonna happen, or is Total Punk gonna do it?**
There will never be a Suburban Homes LP. I just don't think it'll work at 33rpm. The Suburban Homes are short, sharp, and a kick in the head, so 45rpm will be our favored format.

In The Red are releasing the *Second* EP. This should be out before spring; they had some trouble with a pressing plant, so there is a bit of a delay, but this is essentially gonna be out any time soon.

Total Punk will be releasing a 12" EP for the Suburban Homes, probably a little before summer hits. We're recording six tracks for it the first weekend of February.

*thesuburbanhomes.bandcamp.com*
*marketsquarerecordings.bandcamp.com*

I heard that Chantel Ackerman died and then I read that it was a suicide. I was thinking about Mike Kelley and friends and friends of friends who have killed themselves, all freaks, all creative energies. Most of the time across the board when I hear of a writer or musician or artist or general freak dying young I always assume it's either an overdose or a suicide. This is definitely so cheese but maybe it's just that weirdos feel things deep. But I read about Chantel Ackerman and the feeling was the same with Mike Kelley and Mick Crosby and the list goes on. I have an instinct, I'm sure most people do, we all wonder right? Wonder why? Or how? Or the exact hour and location? But to wonder about the details but also having enough sense to shut those questions down quick, those questions are irrelevant and do we really need to know the answers? Do we want to? After my friend Mick killed himself this was a question that I got, that I'm sure all his friends got, how did he do it? It's curiosity that brings that question up (duh) but in reality it doesn't matter.

And then the question why? It doesn't really matter either, but maybe? Did they just feel alone? Spent? Everything? Nothing? The why is really a "what did we do wrong?" "How did we fail them?" Or maybe just a morbid curiosity. A nice thing that was born out of Mick's death was that everyone became even more kind to each other. What else is to be done when your friend kills themself?

Mozart is putting together this little northwest jaunt in March with Violence Creeps and I really wanted to get Defaceman on the Olympia bill. Before we could inquire I connected some dots from various social medias in my head and realized that the drummer had committed suicide a few weeks earlier. I didn't know Adan at all, I haven't lived in Olympia for nearly ten years. There had been all of this stuff on the internet coming from Olympia about suicide hotlines and reaching out to your friends a few weeks earlier, it was obvious that another person had killed themself (I think the last one I had heard about was within the last two years). At some point Kanako put a picture of Adan up somewhere and I recognized him from when I saw Defaceman play in a basement. That band was incredible and weird, one of the few that got in my head in a way that I kept talking them up at any chance. I heard they were cool and I saw them and smiled like an idiot for the whole time, bouncing on the balls of my feet.

And then again via social media I started hearing about a far-off old acquaintance getting hit by a subway train, which to me didn't make any sense really. How do you accidentally get hit by a subway train? She survived and when she came to she took to the internet letting the masses know that she had in fact jumped in front of the train in an attempt to die. Since then she's written more about being bipolar and navigating health systems and keeping it together. It's nice that she's just like, I'm mentally ill and I tried to kill myself. I find it comforting to have someone be honest in things like that. It's nice to be reminded that you're not alone.

I was walking down the street and thinking that it's not a stretch at all to say that everyone knows somebody who has killed themself. What a heartbreaking thought. I thought about my friend Mick who killed himself about a year and a half ago. He was living in Truckee at the time, he mailed a suicide note to his best friend, got on a bus to Oakland, got here and jumped off a building.

I think about killing myself a lot. I don't think I ever will but I think about it a lot. The world is dark and awful and seems hell bent on getting worse. So there's that. I've gotten to a point with my mental illness that I can keep it in check for the most part and I can tell when it's going to get bad and I know most of the things that cause problems. It's under control but persistent. There is a theoretical light at the end of the tunnel but the upcoming darkness looms too. Even on the best days I know there will be another bad one and I never know how long I'll be under that blanket, I never know how long I'll feel level headed, I never know how long I'll feel happy. The facts are vague. I know I will be depressed again, I know I will be manic again, but how and why those things will manifest are unknowns. When I think about suicide it's not really that things feel hopeless, it's more of an exhaustion. Feeling exhausted and knowing the world will continue to feel exhausting.

For me, and I assume most freaks I know, part of the scary heartbreakness of a friend killing themselves is identifying deeply with that action, knowing you've felt that, wondering, why did I get beyond that feeling but they didn't, what happened? Ufff.

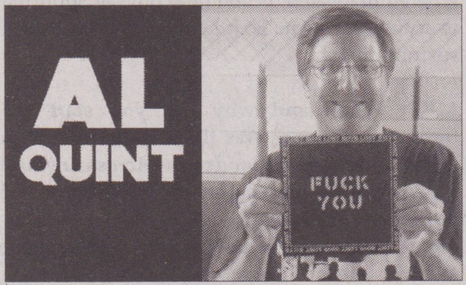
And as I write this and get distracted by social media there's mourning for someone new who committed suicide.

I'm not meaning to imply all of these things are the same, they just all appear as a string in my head.

I don't know what all those others were thinking when they committed suicide, when I consider it I think about different things all of the time. And I know the reassurance "it gets better" but I also know that it will get bad again, and that it might not be as bad as last time but it might be worse. So for me in a battle I just try to remember that love does exist.

I was feeling shitty with a cold the other day on my way to work and possibly wheezing and a stranger asked if I was alright. I was thrown and sputtered that I was kind of sick and without a word she dug into her bag and handed me a cough drop and she walked away and said, "Be kind to yourself."

If you're feeling bad reach out to someone or anyone or even just call this number: 1-800-273-8255.




**UNDER THE RADAR—the 2000s**
I'm an obsessive maker of playlists for my iPod—either putting together sequences from my old mixtapes or having various "best of" collections spanning different years and decades. I've been listening a lot to my best of

the 2000s mixes lately, and there are quite a few songs and bands that might have been lost in the shuffle (not a pun about the iPod shuffle, honest). This column is dedicated to those that flew under the radar a bit. They might not be obscure to everyone, but some of you might want to check these out. Quite a few of them are pretty easy to find and won't set you back that much.

**NAZTI SKINZ** – *Sic Semper Tyrannis* **EP (Youth Attack, 2002).** This is the record that actually gave me the idea for this month's column. Every time I listen to it, I wonder why more people don't know about it. It's probably because this LA band was very short-lived, playing only five shows. This 7" had a one-time pressing of 500 copies. They seem to have disappeared without much of a trace. With members of the LOCUST, LE SHOK, C.R.A.S.H., MONORCHID, and others, the band's name, along with titles like "Defending Liberty" and "Race War", might have caused some confusion (although if you look closely, it's pronounced "*nasty* skins"). It's a twisted mix of basic old-school hardcore, and darker Midwest touches like MECHT MENSCH. Six songs, none of 'em topping a minute.

**REGRESS** – *Price of Power* **EP (Boot Camp, 2001).** Speaking of bands with "members of," REGRESS had quite a pedigree—Joe Losurdo from LIFE SENTENCE, Anthony Illarde from RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED, and Chopper Stepe from NEGATIVE ELEMENT, all '80s Illinois bands. As you'd imagine, this is throwback hardcore, and the production is raw and trebly—and there's even an anti-Reagan song for good measure. They had another 7" after this and actually appeared on *MRR*'s *Public Safety* comp and the second *Histeria* comp on Lengua Armada. So maybe they're not *that* obscure, but this is their best offering and worth hunting down.

**NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE** – *Claustrophobic* **EP (Grave Mistake, 2008).** There's been an endless glut of old-school hardcore punk bands from the turn of the century on, but a lot of it starts to run together after awhile. What made these guys stand out was their fucking relentlessness, particularly on the opening song "Control." This song just moves: guitars on stun, bass on bulldoze, and a tinge of over-the-top Cleveland hardcore burn. And when Jeff Corso bellows *"get the* fuck *out of my way"* on that song, you get the feeling you'd better do just that. One song goes into another with a feedback transition, slowing down only for "Hypocrite," an epic at over three minutes. They had three 7"s and a 12" over their fairly brief tenure, and this one's the best. Alex from Grave Mistake sent me a test pressing of this record for my 50th birthday because he knew how much I love it.

**GENERAL INTEREST** – *Right By The Beach* **12" (Ride The Snake, 2009).** This Boston band was an offbeat, nimble, ultra tight musical unit dishing out some formidable post-punk. Guitar, bass and drums play off each other, and hooks occasionally emerge, but the main attraction is the dynamism in these compositions. Steve Shea's almost cartoonish, semi-spoken vocals and lyrics could be "shit from a new notebook," to quote the MINUTEMEN, one band who were an obvious influence. GANG OF FOUR and NATION OF ULYSSES also figured into the equation. There are political and sociological messages, though they're combined with a smart-assed sarcasm. "Crusty Dog Show" aims a vicious barb at traveler crusties who, while being "freegan" and "going green," still abuse their dogs *("I'll bet you're not spanging for Kibbles & Bits")*. "Capricious Youth" pokes fun at the type of people who can't make up their minds about everything from education choices to relationships.

**IKARA COLT** – *Chat and Business* **LP (Fantastic Plastic, 2002).** Being that they were a UK band and had split up by the middle of the decade, I'm not sure of their level of familiarity these days, but I'm pretty sure they wouldn't be a household name to a lot of my loyal readers. Nervy, sometimes moody math/post-punkish rock, if you want to pigeonhole it. You can hear bits of the FALL, WIRE and late '80s/early '90s AmRep rockers TAR, although there's more drive in their compositions. It's perhaps closer to what a band like HOT SNAKES did, minus the WIPERS inspiration. Paul Resende has a subtle, yet expressive vocal style that accompanies the sound instead of dominating it. A heady mesh.

**CATBURGLARS – LP (Criminal IQ, 2009).** Garagey punk rock that's full of vim, vigor and fun times. Buzz and bash in the vein of some of the Rip Off Records bands, i.e. the sound is rough and the songs snotty as hell. Willfully stoopid lyrics... want an example? *"You make me mad / You make me mad / You make me so mad / You make me mad / You never give me what I want / All you ever do is piss me off."* Heavy sentiments there! A winning tandem of wise-assed attitude and the burn to back it up. And their cover of the RUNAWAYS' "Cherry Bomb" rocks like a motherfucker.

**SHELL SHOCK** – *Born To Kill* **LP (Puke N Vomit, 2005).** Kill, kill, kill, and kill again. A firebomb of hardcore punk—hard'n'fast and catchy, especially the circle pit breakdown for "Declaration." From the opening exclamation of "What the fuck is going on?" this was one of those albums that made me remember what I liked about hardcore. Combine that rage with angry lyrical sentiments, and it's a good way to channel the disillusionment that even middle-aged reviewers still feel—*"We don't want to be like you"* is still something easy to relate to, even to this day. Adhering to the KISS rule: Keep It Simple, Stupid!

**R'N'R – "I've Had It/Your Rules" 45 (Cadmium Sick, 2002; re-pressed by Dead Alive, 2003).** A band with members from different parts of Massachusetts, this was their shining moment (along with their furious track "What's Your Damage" on the *Stab to Kill* comp on Stab and Kill). After a piss-take rock'n'roll intro, R'N'R get down to business with a throttling, mid-paced scorcher, and Joe Shumsky (who played in many bands, including FIT FOR ABUSE, THINK I CARE, and VACCINE) unleashes the anger full-on. By the time he finishes with the long list of things and people he's had it with, you think, "Yeah, I guess he really *has* had it." The B-side also kicks ass.

**FAMILY DOG** – *So Cal Hardcore* **CD (El Pocho Loco, 2000).** Another band doing the simple and straightforward hardcore punk on their one and only release. They definitely don't take themselves too seriously in a lyrical sense, but they don't devolve into forced funny-punk. From a musical sense, this is loud, fast, rough, and buzzing stuff, stripping it down to its high-energy essence. FAMILY DOG included Monty Messex from DEAD FUCKING LAST, and it's very similar to that band's approach. What more could you want? CD-only release.

As I said, most of these records can probably be had fairly cheaply (probably all of 'em except NAZTI SKINZ), either on Discogs or by digging through your local record store's markdown bin.

**THESE SHOULDN'T BE UNDER THE RADAR**

Chris Barrows is a true punk,rock veteran, going back to his days with PINK LINCOLNS in the 1980s and, more recently, SACK. He's back with yet another band, 210*, and the band's debut release is the twelve-song CD *Extinction Event*. Chris has put together a lineup with more punk rock veterans—Robert Lee Davidson (ex-SCREAM) on guitar, Rob Sexton (SLAP OF REALITY) on drums, and Scott Fagerstein (ex-CRUCIFUCKS) on bass. Chris is still playing pure punk, as with his previous bands, although this one has more of a rock'n'roll/metal tinge with Robert's six-string lead work, and it's not quite as raw as SACK was. Truth be told, I liked SACK's album a little more, but this is still a high-energy good time and the sentiments continue to take a sarcastically observational tone—ruminations on religion, politics, addiction to social media, and so on. (210florida@gmail.com)

Speaking of punk rock veterans, Tony Erba and his FUCK YOU PAY ME crew are back with their second album, *Public Disgrace*. As always, Erba has a bone to pick the world. "Pro Gear, Pro Attitude" could be an updated version of GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS' "Closed Mind, Open E," about music scene assholes. "Jesus Loves You (Everyone Else Thinks You're An Asshole)" is for people stuck having to deal with *Fox News*-loving fuckheads in different situations. Musically, as always, it's no bullshit hardcore punk played at a fast clip. They throw in a few other tricks along the way, such as the DIE KREUZEN-ish guitar lick for "Long Live The New Flesh," and they wrap things up with a cover of SUBHUMANS' "Religious Wars." Their third album, *Dumbed Down*, is already in the can and due for release later this year. (Deep Six Records, deepsixrecords.com)

I got a pair of 7"s, both of 'em UK bands, from Tadpole Records not too long ago, although I

think they've been out for awhile. ¡DISCULPE!'s self-titled six song EP offers some bruising punk rawness. Not really in the D-beat category, but it's a wanton eruption, nonetheless. One song is called "Fuck-U-Therapy," and I imagine it's a diatribe against psychiatric care. One could say this is its own kind of therapy, an expression of "fuck you" emotion. Bash-your-skull-in therapy? That works. The other record from Tadpole was ONMACHT's self-titled four-song effort, also a loud'n'furious expression, although it's darker sounding. Screams from an agonized soul, accompanied by a nasty, brutish cacophony. Truthfully, a bit of this bile goes a long way, and ¡DISCULPE! is the pick to click (yes, that's an old expression) here. (Tadpole, tadpolerecords.blogspot.com)

UDÜSIC follow up their demo with a self-titled EP on Painkiller. Mainly fast-paced hardcore with an old-school Midwest inspiration, along with metallic licks, it takes a mid-paced route for "Mature" and "Nice Try." Sarah's vocals have a sarcastic and cutting tone, and the music matches. Muscular two-guitar riffing, lots of rhythmic bash, and the rough-around-the-edges recording gives it presence. (painkillerrecords.bigcartel.com)

PROTESTER's second EP, *No Identity*, maintains their mean-as-fuck hardcore sound. Nothing posi, just anger, reinforced with a beefy sound drawn mainly from late '80s sXe hardcore. Connor's bellicose vocals mesh perfectly with the full-tilt compositions, executed with ruthless precision from burning speed to floor-rattling stomp. Nothing that hasn't been done before, of course, but it's convincing. (Triple-B, 23 Bay State Rd., Apt. 2, Boston, MA 02215, triplebrecords.bigcartel.com)

Feral Ward has unleashed the latest KIELTOLAKI album, *Vapauden Illuusio* (*"The Illusion Of Freedom"*), their first release since 2011 and first full-length since 2009. This Finnish band sounds as ferocious as ever. The production is somewhat cleaner than in the past, but it comes roaring out of the speakers. Their earliest records were packaged similar to records on the Propaganda label in the '80s, and there was an obvious affinity for their country's classic sounds, but there has always been something of a modern polish. One of the lamest things I saw in recent years was when they played a show at a skate park in Massachusetts in 2011. A lot of people who would have loved what they were doing didn't watch them because their t-shirts and shorts didn't fit the Scandi-punk fashion mode. Too bad, because they ripped it up, and they do the same on this album. (feralward.com)

Finally, WOODBOOT's *Crime Time* 12" will give you your daily dose of scorch and then some. It's everything that's right about punk—snotty and catchy, played at full volume, and not giving you time to catch your breath between songs. Some SPITS touches, without the new wave trappings, especially for "Trash Dump," "Smash Your Face," and "Million Dollar Car." So many *killah* punk bands from Australia lately, and WOODBOOT are one of 'em for sure. Three chord terrorists with a whole lot of attitude. (Space Ritual, spaceritual.bigcartle.com)

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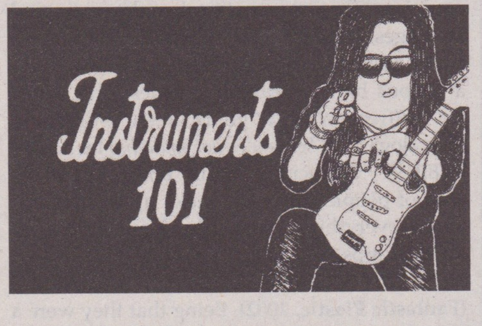


**Setting Up Your Instrument**

Here's one topic I wanted to address since I started this column, but it's a tough one. You have to go back and re-read what I wrote to describe what a guitar is made of, and kind of understand the parts I've described, or just look on the internet. This is going to be technical, and I will say it again, it starts with mounting your strings the correct way. If you don't, the whole set up is fucked up and worth nothing. So if you don't feel confident with how you should mount your strings on your guitar, you should go back to video tutorials online.

Ok, now let's get into setting up your guitar, which is pretty much the same thing for bass. First you need the right tools for the right task: A set of automotive feeler gauges (.002-.025)

- A 6" ruler (with 1/64" increments) and tape measure
- A set of Allen wrenches
- A Phillips head screwdriver
- An electronic tuner
- Wire cutters
- A string winder (optional, but helps a lot)
- A capo

These are essential in order to proceed the tuning of your instrument. My opinion is that Cruztools sells a toolkit, the GTR-1, which is awesome and affordable and in it you get all the tools mentioned above. Their capo sucks, though, so get a better one, like a Kyser or a Dunlop. A capo is an amazing tool, you should get yourself one that is sturdy, and try to put it on the second or third fret of your guitar. I also tried the Cruztools Stagehead Compact tech kit, which is way more affordable, but I didn't find it as convenient as the GTR-1 one.

**Changing Strings**

First, change all of your strings, mount them the proper way, and make sure they are stretched enough to hold a tuning. I don't recommend setting up your instrument with old strings, because old strings don't tell the truth most of the time, and you won't be able to set up your instrument correctly, so a new set of strings only please.

**Truss Rod Adjustment**

Once you're done with strings, the first thing to set up is the truss rod. I know it can be frightening, but it is very easy. The truss rod is an unseen metal bar inside the neck that counteracts the bending force caused by string tension. An ideally adjusted neck will have a moderate amount of relief (curvature) in it to accommodate the vibrating strings. Think of it as a bow. Adjusting it is actually pretty simple, but I'm only talking about an electric guitar right now, this doesn't apply in the same way to acoustic guitars.

Fix a capo to the first fret, then fret the sixth (low E) string at the last fret. Then measure, with the feeler gauges, from the bottom of the string to the top of the 8th fret—the gap should be about .010". When you eyeball the neck by looking down it from the body end toward the headstock, you can see whether the neck is straight or bowed. (I find this method really stupid, but some enjoy it for some reason.) You have usually two kinds of truss rod adjustment mechanisms. One is accessible at the headstock and adjusted using an Allen wrench, the other is accessible at the neck joint and adjusted using a Phillips head screwdriver.

For both types, here's what you do:

**Adjustment at headstock (Allen wrench):** If neck is too concave, (the guitar in playing position, looking up the neck towards the keys) turn the truss-rod nut counter clockwise. Too convex, turn it clockwise.

**Adjustment at neck joint (Phillips screwdriver):** If neck is too concave, turn the truss rod nut clockwise. Too convex, counter clockwise. Check your tuning, then check the gap again with the feeler gauge. That's it. You can double-check your adjustments by sighting down the neck and by measuring that gap again to make sure it's around .010". If you meet excessive truss rod resistance you'd better take your guitar to a tech.

Please, don't unscrew the truss rod screw, or don't turn it more than ¼ of a turn at a time, the adjustment is very subtle. You don't need to mess with everything to make your way out of it.

**Setting String Height**

This one is easy, and more about personal preference than mathematical genius. Check the tuning first, then use a 6" small ruler, or a caliper to measure the distance between the bottom of each string and the top of the 17th fret. You want that distance to be approximately 4/64" (1.8 to 2 mm is fine, you can go down to 1.6 or up to 2.2 mm), which is my recommended spec. Just adjust each bridge saddle (or the bridge height screws if your saddles are preset) until you're there. Ultimately, it's up to you. I suggest some measurements, but you can set the string height wherever it's comfortable for you. Remember that the lower the radius of the fretboard is, the more it is curved, so you might have to set it up accordingly to this, by raising the strings a little higher, if your neck radius is really low, in order to avoid fret rattle.

**Setting Up Pick-Up Height**

Pickups that are set too high can cause all kinds of sonic weirdness. To set them right, fret all the strings at the last fret and use a 6" ruler

or a caliper to measure the distance from the bottom of the first (high E) and sixth (low E) strings to the top of their respective pole pieces. The optimal distances you want will vary depending on what pickups you have, so use the outside pickup mounting screws to adjust those distances.

The distance should be the greatest on the sixth string at the neck pickup position, and closest on the first string at the bridge pickup position. Also, the distance will vary according to the strength of the pickup's magnetic pull. Re-tune, make further adjustments as needed and you're good to go. Pick-ups can only be adjusted by ear, I can recommend you a few distances, but it's just better to find what is best for you. The closer, the more strength you will have; the further, the cleaner your guitar will sound. Usually the neck pick-up provides a higher output because of its position near the neck. So you might have to lower the neck pick-up more than the bridge pick-up. I tend to set the neck and bridge pick-up in a way that when you're in the middle position, you can hear a good balance between both pick-ups, and not just one louder than the other. 8/64" (3.2 mm) for the neck pick-up and 5/64" (2 mm) for the bridge pick-up is usually a good place to start.

Some pick-ups also have adjustable pole pieces, and some don't. If they are adjustable, then take a screwdriver, and adjust the low E and high E pole pieces flush to the metal cover of the pick-up, or flush to the plastic bobbin. Then, adjust the height of your pick-up accordingly to these two poles. After having adjusted the height of the pick-up, you can now adjust each remaining pole accordingly to the curve of the neck. Take your 6" ruler or caliper, and adjust each pole's height to its dedicated string. When you are done, you will notice that each string's output is more balanced.

**Setting Intonation**

Adjustments should be made after all of the above have been accomplished. Set the pickup selector switch in the middle position, and turn the volume and tone controls to their maximum settings. Check tuning. Check each string at the twelveth fret, harmonic to fretted note (make sure you are depressing the string evenly to the fret, not the fingerboard). If sharp, lengthen the string by adjusting the saddle back. If flat, shorten the string by moving the saddle forward. Re-tune, play and make further adjustments as needed.

These specifications are median specs, and they are only meant to guide you. You should not take them as hard rules. If you prefer your action a little higher or lower, change it as you like, but be aware that higher action will be more difficult to play and lower action may result in excessive fret buzz.

In the end, if you're not comfortable with adjusting your instrument by yourself, you can always take your instrument to a tech. My last advice is that you should try it first on a cheap instrument before wrecking your precious guitar, but it's all up to you in the end.

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## i don't think that i need to sit here with you fucking dildos any more

*by Imogen Binnie*

It's winter, *Maximum*, and you know what that means: I kind of hate myself right now.

I mean not in an intense, "Woe is me, I want to die," way or anything. I'm not trying to perform the depth of my feelings for you here or anything. I just feel super disconnected from myself and my body and the things that I do and my own life and stuff. But whatever. Sometimes we hate ourselves. We get through it. No, as people used to say in the 1980s, big whoop.

And I mean, it's not even like it's actually been a winter. I don't know where you live, but over here in the *New* England, it didn't even snow until January, which is weird, and even then it was kind of a pathetic snow. I guess eventually it turned cold, but it hasn't even felt like winter, really, which I think is part of why the winter blahs, as they used to be called in the 1980s, have taken me by surprise.

You know about winter. You know the thing where you look up and it's been two weeks since you went outside while the sun was out, and your body is this bloated monstrosity made 90% out of grocery store Christmas cookie nutrients and expensive fancy Christmas present gift booze, and you feel boring and predictable for feeling shitty about it, and your car's inspection is out of date but you can't get it checked out until you've gotten it re-registered, but the registration is out of date too—like seven months more expired than the inspection sticker—but you can't really get that taken care of because you moved out of your old address to the state next door, so you don't really have an in-state address to give them at the DMV, and you could get one by moving your bank account and phone bill addresses to a friend's house in the state where your car's registered, but that would take weeks, and you can't think that far ahead because there is so much shit you need to do right now—stories to finish, emails to send, songs to write, sleep to catch up on, letters to reply to, work to go to—so you're not even getting it together to set up band practices, which are one of the only things that keep you fucking sane, because you're already living one state over and driving an hour each way to work every day in a car that is a cop magnet, and it's hard to imagine adding another two hours to that, even once a week, so you can get to band practice *already* even before you add on top of that the fact that getting pulled over is extra scary because you're trans, even though it probably shouldn't actually be that scary. Because you're white.

Fuckin' winter, dude.

I even started a band with Noel'le that I'm super stoked about. I'm playing bass through an enormous Big Muff bass pedal, so it sounds like the apocalypse, and Noel'le plays the sickest drums. I'm also having this incapacitating teenage anxiety because, first of all, Noel'le is a brilliant musician who plays all the instruments, and is also a brilliant visual artist who just keeps making the most beautiful art, but second of all because I don't know her that well and I want to be better friends with her (which is why we form bands with people) (also, hey Noel'le, I'm stoked for when you read this and it's weird). But mostly, third of all, because I've got this residual, teenage, avid consumer of *Guitar World* and *Guitar Player* and *Guitar* magazines bewilderment with regard to how the fuck you even make up music, which I *know* is wrong and bullshit. I know that I've made up a lot of music in my life, even though it doesn't feel like I have, but when I'm flopped over in my bed trying to make up sick riffs and I'm feeling uninspired and useless, that "I don't actually know what a mixolydian mode is" stress is the perfect hook to hang all my own musical insecurities on. You know? Even though every band I've ever been in has been awesome! I should know better than to doubt myself, I should just make up some stupid riffs to bring to band practice, but nothing has been sounding very awesome. And I'm sure you know this thought cycle, dude. Where you're beating yourself up for beating yourself up? It's useless and worthless and pointless but it's winter, everything is dead including, to some extent, my heart, and—as human beings used to say in the 1980s—these beans are deeply uncool.

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I've been working on a short story for about a month now. Well, according to the Wikipedia article on word counts, it's a "novelette," not a short story, although that sounds like a made-up word. Either way I made up this story and I've got about ten thousand words of it and I keep futzing with it because the thing is, I am a white person, and it is a story about a white person, but mostly it is a story about a white person who is friends with these two second-generation Somali immigrant punker kids and I like the story, I think everybody in it and everything that happens in it is interesting, but I kind of feel like I'm banging my head against a wall trying to make it be not racist.

But: as a white person, how do you *not* write white supremacist bullshit? Like: fuck stories that are only made up of white people. But fuck also white writers speaking for people of color when people of color can speak for themselves. But also fuck tokenizing secondary characters?

I mean I'm not asking for absolution or sympathy or anything. I guess I'm trying to do the opposite: to be like, if you're a white person trying to Give A Fuck About Shit, these are uncomfortable questions you don't get to solve and feel good about. As a white person in a white supremacist culture, I don't think you get to be comfortable with these kinds of concerns:

a comfortable place is probably, inherently, a white supremacist place.

So how do you be accountable for your implication in white supremacy? Search me, dude. I guess we just try to make our shit as not fucked up as possible and be accountable to criticism from the people who are affected by these dynamics? Please write a letter to *MRR* if you've solved this.

I want to say something here too about our Giving A Fuck About Shit culture that is kind of obsessed right now with both "we're all located at a complex series of intersections in a matrix of privileges and oppressions" and "lol yr fave is problematic and has therefore got to go" and the ways those things play out together. I don't know if I have an insight on it beyond the idea that, together, those things together seem often to function kind of like the *Guitar Player*, *Guitar World*, and *Guitar* magazine narratives that demand that you either know everything and never make mistakes or else that you fuck off.

The joke's on us, people who Give A Fuck About Shit: everybody's problematic. That impulse toward purity is a subcultural manifestation of a normative broader cultural simplification imperative inherent to empiricist/ industrial society in which everybody needs to know what box they and everybody else fit into in order to be able to relate to each other predictably and without being vulnerable or accountable in any even remotely complicated way. Not on a theoretical level, necessarily, but on a practical one this shit tends to boil down to "you are either good or bad," which is maybe the least complex analysis possible. Although of course even that analysis fails to make room for the reality of people's hurt feelings and the fact that nobody is ever obligated to forgive anybody for anything. Shit, as they used to say in the 1980s, is mondo fucking gnarly. Shit is complicated and nobody is pure. We can't really exist in a real way until we learn to accept complexity. And we can't even really start to hold each other accountable in a useful way until we're coming from that place of complexity. These callouts today, in other words, are fucking baby stuff. Step up your game, fuckers.

I don't really want to say anything about any of that though because I don't think I even agree with everything in that last paragraph and this is what I've been thinking about instead of doing any of the shit that I need to do because me and my body barely even have a relationship right now. All I have the energy to do is to stare at this fucking television.

***

Speaking of industrialism, did I tell you about when me and Gage and Noel'le had a Nirvana cover band for the Future Collective cover band show in Brattleboro last year? I forget whether I wrote a column about that or not. It was awesome. We were sort of embarrassingly good. We fucking destroyed. I mostly bring it up because I want you to know that Noel'le isn't a very big Nirvana fan but she played drums anyway and at one point she was like "I fucking hate Dave Grohl's drums, they sound to me like hammers pounding very hard and very regularly. Like factories. They sound like industrialism." She put a bunch of blastbeats and D-beats and stuff into our Nirvana covers.

That's just the kind of stuff she says. Noel'le, as people used to say in the 1980s, rules.

***

I've been watching a lot of shitty eighties movies. I mean, I guess that is a thing that I could say literally any time in my life and it would be true, but it's been particularly true recently. I got a TV and it's the kind of TV that can show Youtube videos and I don't even mean shitty like *The Breakfast Club* or something. There are all these shitty '80s movies on Youtube with names like *Voyage Of The Rock Aliens* and *Zapped!* and mostly all I've been able to do is to see *The Force Awakens* over and over in the movie theater and watch shitty '80s movies about bands and monsters in my room and not talk to anyone except my girlfriend.

I watched all of the *Nightmare on Elm Street* movies in order. And honestly? I think the thing about winter is that you probably just need to give yourself permission to hate yourself, to sit around and do nothing and to wallow and to give yourself shit for being a judgmental asshole and to acknowledge that sometimes you're just stagnating and it doesn't necessarily mean that you're finally aging out of Doing Stuff. Sometimes it just means the pendulum of your life has swung over to Lump and that eventually it'll swing back to Person Who Gets Shit Done. You know?

Maybe what I need to do right now is just to lay around watching the kind of bad movies that make me feel better than awful.

Or maybe what I need is to eat better. Or figure out how to exercise.

Maybe I'd like ice skating?

Or maybe—probably—I just need to find Jesus.

I've been thinking a lot about an old friend of mine. He isn't someone I saw much when I lived in New York. In fact, in the past few years, we really only saw one another twice a year, at Passover and Hanukkah. Other than that, we'd run into each other at a show or a party, incidental meetings. Occasionally we would make a plan to drink coffee on a bench in Tompkins Square Park like we had done often in our early twenties. BThose rendezvous occurred less frequently as we got older and our lives began to take shape in more substantial ways.

That said, there is an intimacy in our friendship that feels profound. There's been an expectation of longevity that other similar relationships don't have. During our afternoons on the park bench, we would joke about our future as old men. It started because of something that happened on the bus. There had been an elderly gentleman sitting alone and clutching a paper bag tightly in both hands. I sat on the bench opposite his and watched him intently. He seemed to have such a sense of purpose, clutching his bag like that.

A stop or two later, another elderly man got on the bus and sat in the empty seat behind the first man, nodding at him familiarly as he'd boarded. While he lowered himself into his spot, he placed a hand on the first man's shoulder and squeezed—a small gesture, but one that seemed significant. The first man opened his paper bag and removed two identical sandwiches. Tuna salad, by the smell of it, on untoasted white bread. He handed one to his companion, folded the paper bag, put it in his pocket, and they silently began to eat. They finished their sandwiches right as the bus reached the park, and they slowly disembarked together. The ritualistic nature of their interaction fascinated me, and for a time I thought about them incessantly. How close were they? How long had they known each other? Did they ever speak? Were they just friends because they lived on the same bus line and were roughly the same age?

Later that week I was in the city at the coffee shop all the punks used to hang out at on Avenue A and I ran into my friend. We took our coffee into the park and sat smoking on a bench. I told him about the two men, and we joked that one day we would be the two old Jewish guys on the bus, moving slow, eating stinky food. "I can't wait," I told him.

"I can't wait till we have to make the kid at the bodega heat our coffee extra in the microwave because we've been smoking so long we can't feel anything in our mouths anymore," he countered.

"I can't wait until we don't understand young people," I said, as a group of teens walked by.

I've never been a *live fast die young* guy, but most of my friendships don't include an expectation that we'll be old together. My relationship with this particular friend is unique in that regard. And that's part of why it was so jarring when he called me to tell me he was sick. "I've got ALS. I'm picking out my wheelchair today," he said. We talked for a minute about what had happened. He'd been diagnosed right before Thanksgiving, but wanted to wait until after the holidays to let people know.

When I flew home in December for Christmas, I went straight from JFK to see him. Sitting on the AirTrain, I started thinking about the decade or so that we'd known each other. I thought about the first time I'd gone to his parents' apartment, before he'd even moved out. I thought about the first time he'd come over to my place on Lorimer Street when we were just beginning to be friends. I thought about all the times we'd hung out, but I also thought about the spaces in between, all the times I hadn't seen

him. One thing I've long admired about him is that he never pulled any punches. He was blunt and direct in a way that wasn't insensitive, but wasn't necessarily *sensitive* either. One of his complaints throughout the years was that he felt taken for granted, or worse, excluded. I never felt like he was leveling that accusation at me, but I always felt like he could have if he wanted to.

And so sitting on the train, I started to wonder what he thought about all these people suddenly coming over to see him. I thought about the fact that I probably wouldn't have been going straight to his house from the airport if he wasn't sick, and it occurred to me that this same thought had most likely crossed his mind as well.

When I got to the apartment, I sat down at the dining room table, and his mother wheeled him out from his room. We drank seltzer like good Jewish boys and shot the shit. We hadn't seen each other since Passover, so there was a lot of catching up to do. His band had just recorded a full-length for a pretty big local label. It was during the recording process that he realized that something was wrong, because he was getting so tired and feeling so weak all the time. Doctor's eventually figured out it was ALS, a neurodegenerative disease that slowly kills off the nerve cells in the body. Pretty soon he was using a walker, and now he's moved onto a wheelchair. "I've got two to five from the onset of the disease, and I probably had it for a year before I was diagnosed," he told me matter-of-factly. He's got the same frankness about his own mortality as he does about everything else.

Conversation moved on to all the different friends that had visited, and then we got to the point in the conversation I'd been afraid of on the AirTrain. "You know, these people keep coming over, people that I haven't seen in forever, and it's so great that everyone gives a shit about me. And I started thinking about how mad I used to be all the time at all these people that I thought weren't calling me enough." He paused to catch his breath, and I waited for the indictment, the moment when he would force me to acknowledge that I was one of those people. "And then I realized I wasn't really calling them either. I just think it isn't worth it to be so mad all the time. At the end of the day, I got a lot done and I had a ton of really great friends, and all the stuff I felt so mad about seems pretty inconsequential."

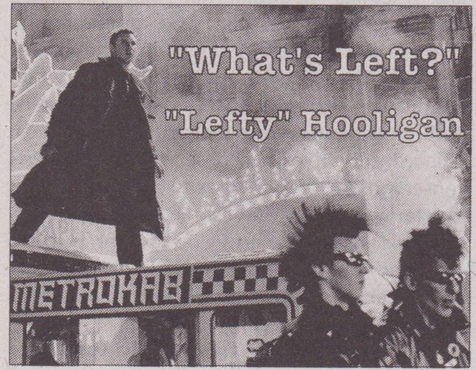
Other people filtered in, and soon there was a whole crew hanging out. I ordered some pizzas, people told stories—it was a nice time. I left feeling sad but heartened—my friend seemed to be in high spirits, like he enjoyed all the company. It's weird to say, but he wears his illness well, or at least as well as one can.

A few days later, at my parents' house, I broke down crying. I'd been running around the city trying to catch up with everyone I don't get to see in Texas, and it wasn't until I was stationary that everything hit me. I felt so sad and so angry at the same time. I know this isn't about me: I'm not the one that's sick, I'm not the one doing the day-to-day caretaking. I know I'm not the one most affected here and my perspective isn't the most important, that's clear, but I'm trying to work out my emotions about someone I care about.

Before I left town, I saw my friend again at the tattoo shop our pal Sue works at. He wants to get covered before he dies, and Sue called a shop meeting where everyone that works there agreed to tattoo him for free. It's so good to see people getting together to mitigate the fucking awfulness of all this, but it's still so stupid that he's sick in the first place. Like, it just seems incredibly unfair.

You know that Jack Palance Band song, "How Can I," on the JPB, ADD/C, Queer Wülf three-way split? I want to leave you with a few lines from that. My records are in storage, so the lyrics may not be right, but here goes.

*How can I live, when I know things are coming I just can't take? / How can I live, when I know that my heart's gonna have to break again? / It's just like my buddy Mike Pack says / he says, "Always tell your friends you love 'em, because you never know when goodbye's gonna be goodbye."*




**VIDAL (loftily):** *As far as I'm concerned, the only pro- or crypto-Nazi I can think of is yourself. Failing that—*

**SMITH (moderator):** *Let's, let's not call names—*

**VIDAL:** *Failing that, I can only say that—*

**BUCKLEY (teeth bared, snarling):** *Now listen, you queer, stop calling me a crypto-Nazi or I'll sock you in your goddam face, and you'll stay plastered—*

*Best of Enemies* (film) 2015
transcript from ABC News coverage, 8/28/68

It was a case of the seven-second delay, or lack thereof. ABC News hired William F. Buckley, Jr. and Gore Vidal to debate the 1968 presidential nominating conventions in real time on live TV as a way of classing up its coverage. The argument got heated, epithets were exchanged, and the above infamous interchange was broadcast uncensored because no profanity delay was in place.

My columns covering the current state of American electoral politics have a built-in delay, not to prevent obscenity, but as a consequence of this magazine's print cycle. Prompted by the film *Best of Enemies*, I'm writing this column in December for an early January deadline in MRR #394, March 2016. I lay out the columns section, including my own, by the end of January, which is the last moment I can make changes to the text. By the time issue #394 gets into your grubby little hands, this column will be over a month out of date, and maybe closer to three. So much for up-to-the-minute electoral coverage and timely political analysis.

The seven-second delay has become ever more ubiquitous, even as the internet has done an end run around censorship in all mainstream media. By tacit agreement, every major and most minor media outlets quickly censored the broadcast, print, and digital images of the Bataclan's blood soaked dance floor after the terrorist attack of 11-13-15. Yet it's easy to find the original uncensored picture online. In 1968, when Buckley and Vidal exchanged their insults, they were seriously upstaged by the rancorous floor fights within the Democratic National Convention as well as the carnage of Chicago police run riot outside the Convention. ABC News allowing Buckley to drop the "q-bomb" on live TV was the least of the network's problems, what with journalists getting beaten up by cops in the streets of Chicago and their contentious, often lurid visuals making the news on TV and in daily papers. By contrast, the well-oiled Republican National Convention earlier in August nominated Richard Nixon on a strict law-and-order platform. The GOP's appearance of firmness, reasonableness and stability in the face of Chicago's chaos helped earn Nixon his landslide victory.

Today, we're faced with the reverse.

The Democratic National Convention (July 25-28) looks to be a snooze, with Hillary the foregone nominee and Bernie promising not to buck the party process. The Republican National Convention (July 18-21) has all the makings of a good old donnybrook, a full-fledged political melee, thanks to Trump's candidacy. There's talk of a split convention with a nasty floor fight over who to nominate. The old-white-male GOP establishment is thinking about brokering the convention, with Trump and Carson threatening to jump ship. Simply put, the Republicans are clusterfucked.

If Trump is nominated, he will lose to Hillary. Most observers agree that the Republicans will lose big time, on a par with Barry Goldwater's landslide defeat in 1964. If Trump loses the nomination and bolts the Republican Party with an independent presidential candidacy, the GOP will split, and both the party and Trump will lose. This is the Ross Perot Third Party scenario, and it holds to a lesser degree for Carson. The only way that the Republicans have even a chance of winning against Hillary would be if Trump loses the nomination, gracefully accepts the GOP's decision and throws his full weight behind the party's nomination. Not fucking likely. Any way you look at it, the Republicans will be bruised and bloodied at the very least, but more likely irreparably splintered into warring factions. In turn, the GOP's efforts to remain viable are seriously threatened because the unity and respectability of the conservative

movement underlying it has completely unraveled.

Tim Yohannan marshaled *MRR*'s shitworkers into keeping this magazine running after he was diagnosed with terminal non-Hodgkins lymphoma. No, Tim never promised Mykel Board a columnist position in perpetuity, and yes, he wanted to give *MRR* to George Tabb who turned it down because he couldn't figure out how to move the magazine to New York City. For Tim Yo, the single most important characteristic of someone capable of running *MRR* was being an asshole when required, with the ability to make the hard decisions—like firing columnist Jeff Bale or refusing ads from Caroline Records because of their major label involvement or even pulling out of Mordam Records because Mordam was no longer punk enough—and to take the heat for making them.

But there are assholes, and then there are assholes.

Gavin McInnis argues that "Trump is crass and rude and irrational [and an asshole], but that's what we need. We need hate. We need fear mongering." Trump supporters are more than willing to see the GOP crash and burn in order for Trump to win. "The Republicans are pussies," according to McInnis, and if they can't get behind a Trump nomination, they deserve to lose. It's not because clowns like McInnis have no skin in the political game as a new Canadian immigrant recently turned American citizen. Younger Republicans and youthful conservatives are simply no longer willing to abide by Buckley's dictum to: "Nominate the most conservative candidate who is electable," or Ronald Reagan's 11th Commandment that: "Thou shalt not speak ill of any fellow Republican." They're prepared to hold onto their conservative principles and make their point come hell or high water, even if it means trashing their fellow Republicans, wrecking the GOP, and destroying the conservative movement.

In supporting a conservative asshole like Trump, a younger generation of 30-to-40-something conservatives is ignoring the legacy of yet another conservative asshole, William F. Buckley, Jr. *National Review* columnist Jonah Goldberg praised Buckley for employing "intellectual ruthlessness and relentless personal charm to keep that which is good about libertarianism, what we have come to call 'social conservatism,' and what was necessary about anti-Communism in the movement. This meant throwing friends and allies off the bus from time to time. The Randians, the Rothbardian anarchists and isolationists, the Birchers, the anti-Semites, the me-too Republicans: all of these groups in various combinations were purged from the movement and masthead, sometimes painfully, sometimes easily, but always with the ideal of keeping the cause honest and pointed north to the ideal in his compass." (*NR Online*, 10-27-05) Buckley relentlessly purged the conservative movement with the excuse of ridding it of anti-Semites and wingnut conspiracy theorists. According to Paul Gottfried however, Buckley's "victims *became* 'wing nuts' by virtue of having been purged and slandered. The purges were not a passing or merely ancillary aspect of conservatism; they were a *defining* characteristic of a movement, whose function was to stake out ground where the Left had been the moment before." Gottfried calls this Buckley's "Great Purge" in service of building, maintaining and defending a respectable "Conservatism, Inc."

But the GOP's many tendencies and factions were never purged and the conservative movement was never purified. After arch-conservatives took control of the 1964 Republican National Convention to nominate Goldwater for his disastrous presidential run, Goldwater's conservative base was decimated. Moderate-to-liberal Republicans like Nixon and Rockefeller gained ascendency, but the GOP's conservative wing did not evaporate. Instead, these conservatives went underground and grassroots, organizing from the base up until they elected Reagan in 1980 for eight years of neoliberal dominance. Moderate Republicans are now endangered, and the liberal ones extinct. Today, conservative tendencies and factions abound; not just Randians, Rothbardian anarchists and isolationists, Birchers, anti-Semites, and me-too Republicans, but also Tea Partiers and neoliberals, white nationalists and supremacists, New Rightists, AltRightists and neo-reactionaries, evangelicals, paleoconservatives, neoconservatives and social conservatives, lone wolves and conspiracy nuts, libertarians and Establishment Republicans, *yada, yada, yada*. Is it any wonder that Trump's candidacy has prompted the GOP to come apart at the seams and the conservative movement to descend into internecine warfare?

Don't get me wrong. This isn't a bad thing, the GOP going down in flames. Hilarious, in fact. I just wish there was some equivalent, serious opposition in the Democratic Party and the wider progressive movement to the juggernaut that is Hillary, Inc. Of course, Bernie will make a valiant primary effort at the Democratic National Convention, but he will lose and just as valiantly accede to the party's nominee. Maybe Black Lives Matter will stage some level of protest inside or outside the convention, but I don't see mass leftie protests targeting the Democrats anytime soon. And much as I like an acrimonious, bare-knuckled, equal brawl, that's not likely to happen either. My prediction at this point in the print cycle is that Ted Cruz will be nominated by the Republicans, but Trump will only grudgingly step aside. With the GOP at less than full strength, Hillary will win the presidency.

Great! Four more years of Republican whining and right-of-center Democratic gloating and nothing ever getting done. If the GOP survives, that is. American politics are so fucking lame and unsurprising. A Public Policy Poll recently asked: "Would you support or oppose bombing Agrabah?" Of the Republicans who responded 57% were not sure, 13% opposed it, and 30% said they supported it. When it came to Democrats 55% were not sure, 36% opposed bombing Agrabah, and 19% said they supported it. Agrabah is the mythical kingdom in the 1992 Disney movie *Aladdin*.

(Copy editing by K Raketz.)

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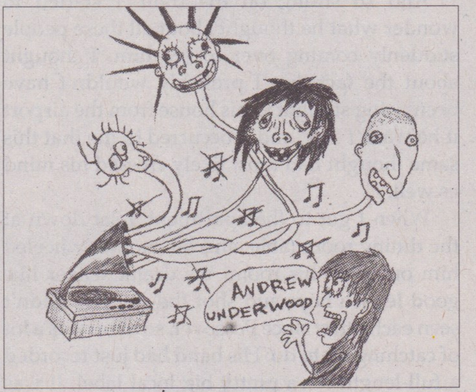


Fuck. Aaagh, urgh, fuck. A fuckin' lot of stuff has been happening lately, and I can't quite get it all sorted in my brain, so this column might get a little weird. Sad news and stuff I don't know quite how to feel about and really, really good stuff too. Life as usual, I guess.

Start with the good stuff: long-term readers of the column will remember my beloved dog Lucy, who passed away in August 2014. We have felt the loss every day since then (I can still make myself cry by thinking about her too hard), but we finally adopted a new dog! Ruby is a medium-sized, brown mutt (pitbull probably, and…some other breed) who's had a really shitty life. She's about four years old and spent a little more than three of those years in a pen, beaten and abused by both people and other dogs at a backwoods dog breeder's operation. When we first met her, she couldn't even stand to be looked at. She was a terrified, cringing, hiding, scarred-up mess. The shelter we got her from told us candidly that they didn't think anyone would ever adopt her. While she's still got a way to go, she's already opened up in amazing ways. This is a dog who has had to learn how to use stairs, how to play, what a toy is, how nice it is to go to the bathroom somewhere other than in the cage you live in, and especially what it is to give and receive love. I like to think she's loved every minute of it. It's been about two months since she joined our family, and I can't imagine anything more satisfying than giving this sweet lovely girl the life she deserves. I'll miss Lucy every day for the rest of my life, but it's wonderful to feel like our family is complete again.

Weird stuff: so DEATH SIDE and G.I.S.M., two bands with dead guitarists, are performing in the year 2016. Both "reunions" are confusing in very different ways. The G.I.S.M. thing is such a blatant cash grab from a performer who hasn't really been engaged with the punk scene in years (good 'ol crazy Uncle SKV) that it's

baffling that anyone attaches any significance to it at all. Sakevi and several dudes, some of whom may have been in the band at some point in the past, are playing an incredibly expensive metal festival on a giant stage, presumably for a hefty sum of money. How the fuck could any punk rocker possibly give a shit? At least the "SEX PISTOLS" reunion had the decency to call it the *Filthy Lucre Tour* instead of clinging to the iconography of their heyday like it wasn't thirty years later.

On the other hand, the surviving members of DEATH SIDE have all remained involved in the DIY punk scene. They're doing their reunion gigs through punk channels but... fuck, it's weird. I have been lucky enough to have spoken to several ex-members of DEATH SIDE (back when DEATH SIDE wasn't a thing anymore). None of them wanted to fuckin' talk about DEATH SIDE, they wanted to talk about their new bands. That made a huge impression on me, and it's an attitude that I respect more than anything. Has the message that the past is the past and that punk (and life) is all about moving forward instead of basking in past glories withered to nothing? That's for everyone to decide for themselves, but as a person who considers DEATH SIDE to be the best band that ever was, I hope that everyone who does decide to go has a great time.

Sad news: it's gotten around by now to everyone who cares that Filip Fuchs passed away in early January. This means a lot to so many people. Filip was not only the guitar player of SEE YOU IN HELL, the editor of what was by far the best Czech-language fanzine (*Hluboká Orba*), a promoter of gigs, and a tape trader extraordinaire—he was a lawyer who battled against injustice on behalf of the Romani people, he was a husband and a father, and most of all...he was a fucking punk rocker. Down to the bone a punk rocker, with militant ideas about what that meant and no willingness to compromise those ideals for anyone or anything. I wish I'd been able to know him sooner, and I definitely wish I'd been able to know him for longer. Like everyone who crossed paths with him, I immediately understood the extent of his knowledge and the depth of his passion, and like a lot of other people on this Earth, his opinions meant a hell of a lot more to me than most other people's. It's a stupid and worthless sentiment in the face of reality, but I really and truly wish he wasn't gone.

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Well shit, let's talk about some fuckin' records, huh? Being a lazy ass (and a closet vinyl snob) I kept putting off picking up the new MIDNIGHT RESURRECTOR CD (*Hated True Sounds*), and as it I'm glad I did because Laboratory Records put out a super-swank gatefold LP of the same material. MIDNIGHT RESURRECTOR are ex-NO SIDE, but it's difficult to draw any parallels between NO SIDE's stripped-down USHC style and the metallic, rocking hardcore contained in these grooves. This release stands alongside other tough, rock'n'roll influenced Japanese bands like TETSU AREI and DEMOLITION. There's a ton of metallic crunch in the guitars, and a fair bit of soloing (speaking of which, holy fuck, the over-the-top MAIDEN-esque guitar break in "Ideologists/Materialists" is jaw-dropping), but at the core this is straight-up hardcore in the classic Japanese tradition, gang choruses and all. Every track is solid, though I think I prefer the EP version of "Full Metal Armor" to the more elaborate re-recorded version here. "Real Hardcore – Please Stand Up" will resonate with our older readers, leading off with the brilliant couplet *"I'm the original thick voice criminal / Fuck the digital, I got the vinyl."* Goddamn, I have a shitload of other records to write about, but I just want to put this on over and over again. Also, this packaging is way cooler than the CD, with an amazing cover illustration, obi, and gatefold. This LP is numbered out of 300, so if you're interested, you need to track one down fast! (Laboratory / Spooky Bank)

Hot take: the EXIT HIPPIES / SUN CHILDREN SUN *Live From Transcentral* split cassette on Black Konflik is a super-niche recording that will make a very small number of people very happy. To be honest, it's great. The EXIT HIPPIES side is almost disappointingly straightforward (damn, no techno at all?!), but the set is chaotic and SORE THROAT-y enough to make up for it. It's an interesting change of pace for the EXIT HIPPIES side of a split to be the relatively predictable one for a change. As it turns out, SUN CHILDREN SUN are surprisingly aggressive live, especially in the vocal department. Given their laidback demeanor I half expected a lounge act, but their side is high-energy chaos all the way. Is that a theremin I hear in the background or just tape warble? Who knows with these cats. As usual, they provide a frenetic stop-start blend of punk, thrash, reggae, and improvisational weirdness that is either brilliant or stupid, depending on how uptight you are. I'd love to know what the Malaysian kids thought of their stuff. (Black Konflick)

I've been all in on Singapore's LIFELOCK for a while, and it seems that slowly but surely the world is catching on. Their recent split tour EP with Japan's RAPPA is both a high-profile release (relatively) and maybe the best work they've ever done. While there are some up-tempo moments, one could never call this stuff less than absolutely controlled, noise and all. The most immediate reference is post-*Tragedy*, pre Dis-Bones-era DISCLOSE. The bellowed-from-the-chest vocals, the immaculately curated feedback, and the ridiculously locked-down rhythm section are all hallmarks of the style that LIFELOCK pull off with aplomb. LIFELOCK are just a joy to listen to on their side, confident and powerful, in total control of their sound. On the flip side, RAPPA will win some fans as well. Being ex-GOUKA, they're not exactly neophytes in the tough D-beat hardcore game, and this stuff is absolutely top-notch. The most immediate and favorable comparison is with NO FUCKER, as RAPPA have a very similar straightforward and back-to-DISCHARGE approach to the D-beat style. My next thought, for what it's worth, is that there are quite a few bands who could learn a thing or two about achieving a proper ratio of noise to riffs by listening to this stuff. Shit, to be honest, most "D-beat" bands of today could probably benefit from extended study of both sides of this monster. (4490 Records)

Holy shit, ASOCIAL TERROR FABRICATION apparently are 100% committed to a real-time reenactment of the Brit-core scene. They started several years ago (well, more than "several" at this point) as a killer stench/crust band with heavy DOOM influence. Fast forward a few releases and a few more years to the most recent demo, *Folly of Wisdom*, and all of a sudden they are channeling *In Battle...*-era BOLT THROWER and even a touch of early PARADISE LOST. I'm not going to lie, I definitely prefer crust to metal, but the combination of the raw as fuck recording, awesome throwback art, and completely sincere vibe of this release is utterly charming. Besides, they're doing better at "going metal" than a ton of Brit-core bands and every band in the history of the city of Boston. Kvlt black metal fans are going to pick this up and think it's super-underground while we have like five records by this band already. (self-released, try Batman Records)

*Get in touch if you want, c/o MRR or agunderwood@gmail.com.*

I've had a couple of weeks to clear my head after the overwhelming task of reducing all of the music that I didn't hate in 2015 to a mere ten-item list. Now that I'm free of any self-imposed pressure to not forget or overlook anything, I can actually write something meaningful about some other tapes and records from last year that don't deserve to fall off your radar. The process of seeking and listening and thinking critically about the past is never really done. There were dozens of records that were brought into this world before I was that were just as new to me in the last twelve months as the ones that were actually created in 2015, so we'll get to a few of those, too. Time is an arbitrary construct anyway, right?

The self-titled cassette from Geneva, Switzerland's enigmatic, minimal post-punk combo MARAUDEUR hit my mailbox a little too late to get a shout-out in my 2015 year-end roundup last issue, but now is as good a time as any for some minor historical revisionism,

because I really want to pretend like I'd been able to slip this one in. MARAUDEUR started as the solo four-track bedroom recording project of Lise Sutter, who also plays with Swiss garage-punks the STACHES. Sutter recently recruited some co-conspirators for a proper backing band and even traveled to the States this August to play a handful of shows in the Bay Area (but nowhere else!). The lineup was complete with two bass players channeling the interlocking dual-bass post-punk throb of DELTA 5. Sutter handles all of the instrumental and performance tasks for the tape's seven songs, creating bleary-eyed sounds for late night insomniac strolls through desolate city streets. The production is all metronomic drum clatter, distinct, the fuzzed-out synth warble of classic French coldwave, and perfectly blasé female vocals. It's like a European counterpart to the actual-not-pretend Erika Elizabeth 2015 year-end roundup entrants SNEAKS. I can only hope this means that there's even more rumblings of early '80s-styled, non-boy-dominated, icy post-punk underway from dozens of other new bands that we'll hear about in 2016. (self-released, maraudeur.bandcamp.com)

My first thought upon listening to *A Whore Lunch / Capitalist Night-time Breakfast*, the latest cassette from the PSYCHIC SOVIETS (presumably named after the book by former "Sassiest Boy in America," Ian Svenonius) was that the YUMMY FUR had really pulled a fast one and reunited under a completely different guise. It's all there: the brittle razorwire guitar lines; the stuttering, off-kilter rhythms; the conversational vocals that come across like a slightly more socially adjusted (and Scottish) Mark E. Smith. I mean, they're even from Glasgow, for fuck's sake. You could also travel back a little further into the history of Scotland's post-punk underground and pick up on some unsubtle nods to the caustic FALL worship of the COUNTRY TEASERS, or if you really want to get into some geographical scene cosmology, the freewheeling, jagged spiral scratch of the FIRE ENGINES. There's not really anything in these four songs that can't be found in those specific inspirational blueprints, and that's kind of beside the point, as they're just extending that old FALL ideal of the three R's: *repetition, repetition, repetition*. There's nothing here to dislike, but the best of the bunch might be "Authority Complex." It features a delirious, jabbing Moebius strip hook that continuously pushes you away as you keep stumbling back toward it, and agitated lyrical rantings delivered like cut-up Dadaist poetry. Reunions are counter-revolutionary; the PSYCHIC SOVIETS are the now. (Number 4 Door, psychicsoviets.bandcamp.com)

*Recent not-recent excavations file, part one:* In the early '80s, before "post-punk" got weighed down in the myopia of hundreds of bands who simply wished that they were in GANG OF FOUR or WIRE, London's SELF CONTROL were musical envelope-pushers who didn't shy away from exploring all sorts of disparate noise-making paths, liberated from punk's already played-out "no future" three-chord dogma. Starting out in 1977 (naturally), the band cycled through line-ups and name changes (including, at one point, an incarnation as TOTAL CONTROL!) while trying their hands at everything from bleak, minimal synth-pop to buoyant new wave to theatrical avant/experimental soundscapes. 1983's *Broken Up* LP totally encapsulates that eclecticism. The deep, monotone vocals and stripped-down, martial bass/drum drone on "Elastic" suggest JOY DIVISION's "She's Lost Control" with the ability to crack a smile. "No or Yes/Good View" backs up an ethereal, haunting female voice with little more than a steady, subdued drum machine pulse and unexpected interjections of processed electronic sound. The violin-accented, off-kilter pop song "A Thousand Days" leans closer to the GO-BETWEENS or the TELEVISION PERSONALITIES than the jagged, spiky sounds typically associated with England's first wave of post-punk. Well worth the couple of bucks that tracking down a copy will set you back.

SAD HORSE has been one of the best bands going here in Portland for years now, and *Greatest Hits* (titled with tongues almost certainly planted firmly in cheek) collects twenty-six songs pulled from the band's first two cassettes and additional tour tapes that first surfaced between 2008 and 2012. In spurts of about a minute or so each go-round, Elizabeth and Geoff shriek in tandem over giddily bashed drums and guitar lines that have been tangled into a wigged-out, angular jangle. The end result resembles nothing as much as a punk-informed, co-ed SHAGGS on a sugar rush. There are elements of raw, primitive garage rock and outsider art-punk eccentricity at play here, but SAD HORSE's whirlwind lo-fi racket is too far out there to really fit neatly into those sorts of boxes. I feel like their (excellent) choice of covers points to a few kindred musical spirits, though. On *Greatest Hits*, they tackle "Old Daze," a SEBADOH deep-cut from their fractured and noisy home-taping days, and "Sister Hell" by surrealist-rock oddballs THINKING FELLERS UNION 282. It conjures up that particular strain of smart-assed, DIY noise-pop that had it's heyday back when the Homestead Records catalog reigned supreme on college radio in the late '80s and early '90s. Real treasures, these two. This city would be worse for the wear without them. (Mississippi/Eggy Records, sadhorse.bandcamp.com)

*Recent not-recent excavations file, part two*: In true UK DIY fashion, Liverpool trio SEND NO FLOWERS' recorded output is limited to a three-song single on Praxis Records from 1982. One of those tracks (plus two others) surfaced on two hodge-podge cassette compilations released in 1982 and 1983. The single, in particular, is one of those hiding-in-plain-sight post-punk gems that, for whatever reason (not being posthumously comped, not being on a label with a Rough Trade-style hip cachet, having their band name hijacked in the mid-'90s by a group of choking-on-flannel English grunge also-rans, etc.), seems to have been lost in the dustbin of history. The lilting female vocals and bass-anchored hopscotch rhythms on "Playing for Time" and "One More Day" sound like they'd stumbled on the perfect equilibrium between the 4AD and Factory Records factions in the early '80s UK post-punk underground. The dark, disco-not-disco danceability of "Wall of Convention" is right in line with what many of their peers like the AU PAIRS, DELTA 5, or the MO-DETTES (all of whom, have since become household names amongst '78–'82 English femme-punk fetishists) were doing concurrently. Even your sad goth friends might be on board with them!

*Send me letters and music!*
*Analog: Erika Elizabeth 2545 E. Burnside Street #203, Portland, OR 97214 USA*
*digital: ripitupstartagain@gmail.com.*
*Radio shows for your listening enjoyment: expresswaytoyrskull.com.*

## BRACE BELDEN is THE LAST PUNK

*"2016"*
*—Abraham Lincoln, 1864*

Rich city boys into nice boots and fake leather. Electricity fiends! Racists on quads with crucifixes hanging around their necks. Criminals of the highest order. Shit for brains, dirt bike folk, country boys who dig nice trucks and anal sex. These are our enemies!

My teeth are filed to points, my pink tongue flicks between them. What a vision! Pale from a life spent wholly in the undergrowth, my skin mottled with yellow-purple bruises from being trod upon by the new aristocracies $600 hiking boots. I sleep with a loaded revolver one foot from my head. I read Lenin and think: What Is To Be Done?

Horror and terror, my pillars and bricks. The creeping feeling I've carried with me forever, if anything has grown stronger and more urgent. Six out of the last eight years, I have shit out the same column in the New Year. I have, with a restraint admirable and rare for a paranoiac like myself, refrained from any of the easy Chicken Little pessimism which any thinking person finds easy to write. This year will be different.

We are caught between a vortex and a whirlpool; on one hand, we have the vicious and insane neo-liberalism of the West; on the other hand, we have Salafist bomb-hurlers. Where are we? We're stuck, as most people always are, in the middle. Right in the trench that lies between the barricades. What is to be done?

Make no mistakes: There are brownshirts in our future, and they'll be clad in puffy

jackets and balaclavas; they will trod upon our wretched faces in Ugg boots and cruise over our futures on snowmobiles. Shaking with terror! Is this our fate?

Phlegm gurgles in my mouth as I snore...I'm sick, anybody can tell. My body is shutting down... Here's the truth of it: I'm sick for I'm condemned to a penury of both wallet and soul!

Some days I think I am a Stalinist. I stumble down the street with the knowledge in my aching head that I love mankind and want a just society; then I see a bankers boy with his head up his ass, drunk and yelling at some bum on the street begging for change. I have murder in my blood, I think, and that is a very dangerous thing and I must control it.

I ask: Can you fix man without violence? Must you beat his morals into him? I believe, of course, that educating the masses is one of the top tenets of being a good Communist. But has education worked so far? What is education in the face of a new iPhone, in the shadow of Amazon Prime?

I used to think we are all of us made of gold; soft, precious malleable—and ultimately worthless.

The pampered bullies and pimpled butches of this world, in their myopic fumbling, can only ever cause destruction and anguish. It doesn't matter whether they're clad in black shirts or desert rags. They are cyphers for all the ugly hatred that's been squeezed like juice from a lemon into the eyes of the hearts of simpletons and lunatics. Nations cling to neoliberalism and technological progress at any cost. We are their chauffeurs, their waitresses, we walk their dogs and park their cars. There is a new underclass, as yet unnamed, not factory workers but cogs in the machinery of the great refineries that belch black smoke made of human dignity. Our masters are good liberals, Obama voters, although often they are libertarians as well but really, friends, there is no difference. They all want our blood whether they know it or not.

It seems like in this country the toiling masses do not want to be reached, that this nation of shopkeepers, hermit-paupers and drug addicts are content to navel-gaze into oblivion.

A shock will change their tune.

Of course I cannot claim to know what will happen or when, but believe me when I say that every bone in my reptile body assures me that there is something afoot. I know in my ugly little heart that 2016 will be a defining year for Late Capitalism, and almost as an afterthought, for you and I. We must prepare!

Perhaps this will happen: We will be caught in the apocalypse brewing with ingredients poured in equal parts by the decadent West and the medieval Islamist maniacs that pour out of the slums that we in the West have helped keep rotten.

Perhaps this will happen: Economic collapse and the spread of neo-Serfdom.

Perhaps this will happen: Weird war of such a strange nature that I cannot pretend to divine it, between Super-Powers devoid of ideology but lusty nonetheless for the bones of foreigners. I eat dry rice and dogmeat; I feel it prepares me. Then, when the time is right—I'll jam a stick up their cunts, cut off their balls! Perhaps I romanticize too much the ascetic terrorists of the early 20th century; maybe they're just a myth and I believe in them like some believe in Christ. If that's the case—so bet it! Belief in Christ has certainly worked for many, and my belief in the burning crucible of the bomb is at least as powerful, for the bomb is real and the bomb is believable. Christ hasn't performed a miracle in two millenniums; bombs perform theirs every day!

There are degrees of terror, like there are degrees of pain. Different strains of ugliness are balanced on a scale, while beauty is way off, high up in the air above all that. Oh, perhaps, you've had a good day today. Don't let that blind you! Remember, always that there are children lapping up brackish water from polluted streams, their malformed, useless cupping the sludge to their mouths. There are women who have sacrificed their own bodies, have given bent and broken backs so that you may wear your clothing. There are slaves in this world, millions of *actual slaves,* toiling without even the concept of hope or happiness. Sick minds in dirty holes plot death for billions. Terror surrounds you, though you might not be so acutely aware of it always, but it of course it's still there, burning through the linen in your closet and the paint on your walls.

Oh! You say. He's being dramatic! I might be. I don't know. I *do* know that the world no longer needs punks like you. After all, what are punks but sniveling brats with soap in their hair. Wretched little creeps scampering around in the shadows of the world. Detached from the people, detached even from reality, a bunch of nihilistic nothings shouting into the void. One must reach *beyond* punk, one must grab life by the hair and shake its ugly little head!

Do me a favor, look in the mirror. Tell me what you see; better yet, let me guess. A bald-headed skinny boy in a jean jacket with some buttons on it. Is that all you'll ever be? Christ! Ask yourself that: *Will you ever be more than this?* The way things are going, no, no you won't, you'll be working at that record store or coffee shop or maybe your friend can get you a better job and you'll work and live in a shared house and fuck the same people as your friends and maybe you'll marry one of them but so what? You'll be poor and sometimes miserable but at least you have your friends I suppose and that's something. But your friends are all poor and miserable too, although not poor or miserable enough so that they'll do something about it. I don't mean that the solution is to get a better job, maybe put your useless degree to work and find some semi-gainful employment just so that you can feel empty in a bigger house. We are all of us condemned to a penury of the fucking soul. When I say solution, I mean the bomb.

For now, though, we stand in front of the statues of our heroes and shake our fists. You yell, as one: Up with shackles! Glory to the jailers! *Long live our chains!*

I spent my birthday in the company of my beloved partner (confirming my sexuality: I'm in love with Mészáros Anna, full stop) watching this newly released film called *Youth* in a room where the average age was around 60. Old people could not construe modern cinema, not even as modern as this piece was, therefor they grabbed every opportunity to loudly articulate their incomprehension which made for an entertaining atmosphere.

The movie mused over the process of aging and how oldsters cope with forgetting, remembering, feeling and knowing their lives and the art that they have created and how their creations combine reality with fantasy. The film did not suggest that the director would really know what people feel, think, forget, remember when they reach the dusk of their lives. Thus, having a room full of elderly people coming for something and getting nothing on my birthday, which is about aging and thinking and feeling, felt like getting a present from life. I'm one year away from turning thirty which equals punk death but there is so much more in life than to only be (a) punk and in a twisted way I'm sort of mesmerized by the fact that I look on every of my year as a failure since I always want and need to do more. Dear diary, this is a year in review.

In 2015 I desperately started to hate my youth, especially the way I have spent it on nothing, really. I know that I was clueless as much as I didn't even know what I have not known then but I'm still as naïve as I can boldly think such realization could have come earlier. I guess it's a painful realization to know you are only that smart to know you are not smart at all and instead of useful facts I mostly just have memories of smashing bottles at abandoned railway stations and destroying shit. Also instead of learning new things and trying to change I spend my precious hours pining over mistakes and wasting time.

To balance this out, this year I tried to learn a lot. I tried and failed because I'm extremely lazy and with a normal job and a variety of punk activities my free time is reduced enough to rely on my diligence. That diligence that I don't have. I have an awful amount of plans, projects which lead me to carry around four notebooks in which I make notes, lists,

sentences, thought maps and drawings but mostly they do not lead me anywhere, beyond manufacturing drafts. This year I had to write on a board what I am and I wrote that I'm a laic, meaning that even though I don't know anything, I do everything. What I did not tell is that noise allows me to achieve such goals. The noise around me. I come from a country that is very noisy. Not the neighborhoods nor my physical environment but our everyday. Even staring silently is disturbingly loud here. We do not understand life, our life, what we live, how we live, why we live. And if you realize that nothing has to be taken seriously since nothing means anything then you can conceal your output into this confusion. (Footnote to anyone: I don't speak English still I've been published here for years now; the noise of punk allows me to ramble and not be laughed at too loud.)

My main goal this year was to reduce noise. I started to stumble around it and observe it closely whenever I could catch a glimpse of it. The noise is the context and context is a collage of connections. Connections that are the political environment in the rage of punk, the rage of punk that is the music of punk, the music of punk and the non verbal communication of punx, punx who are citizens of states with backgrounds, daily jobs, emotions. Life and paintings, album covers and the funeral of contemporary hardcore, band names and pamphlets that lie.

As I read more books, I started to listen to music differently and I ended up staring at paintings. During an interview with one of the most exciting record labels I went through a transformation. I have started to question what I like, why I like it, what are the bands' intentions, what do I want and how do I want it. This new approach made me listen to records in a different way, approach records in a different way, observe my environment in a different way, construct my thoughts, my sentences in a different way and to see connections between these things and see the totality of these connections in one context.

I have grown away from people in the sense that I need solitude. The less I see them the more they like me and the more I like them on the rare occasions when we are together.

One early afternoon while watching television and rolling around in our bed I thought about some minor thing that had some sort of order among two equally valued things in itself but in my mind the order made a ranking between these two objects, the order created a hierarchy in which one participant was above the other. I had to say out loud that I am such an idiot for thinking in such a way, for dividing the world between good and evil and winners and losers and not realizing that what's relevant is that how all these things relate to each other, where and how they connect and define each other. I have realized that I'm not better than anyone else and I should crush down my own ego to a point where it's still healthy to retain one but it should not dictate anything to me. This resulted in that whenever I do anything I don't know how it will end. I might know how I want it to end but I let it be anything that helps me to find out what I'm looking for. I'm looking for answers rather then proof and evidence that would support my cause. (Yet, again, I have no cause.) This is not chaos, this is discipline that I don't yet have but desire.

I desire tact, a faster working brain or a larger time frame to do well in disturbing situations that allows me to think things through so I need more focus and vigilance. With these I won't be good since no one is just good and I don't even desire to be just good because I have also realized that in many cases I'm a huge asshole and few of these occasions I don't care too much to do anything to change this.

For the first time I have read *Distort, More Noize, Shit-Fi* and discovered these unique perspectives on different aesthetics of punk. These media influenced me to go find my sounds, to learn more about those that I already like and discover more I desire, to find my own voice to tell about my obsessions. To think about what I have gathered together and take seriously the way I consume these creations. To take my obsessions seriously and speak about them bravely, since they are not sacred to question, think, deconstruct, dig.

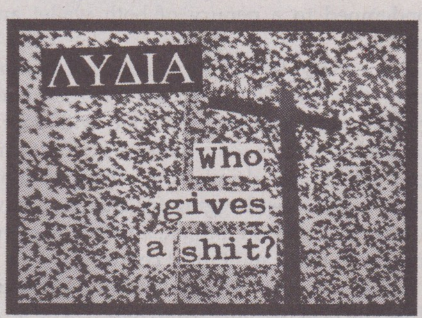
I have also realized that punk takes itself too seriously as much as it exists within closed gates which makes us believe what we do is the whole universe. But punk doesn't even have to be. It's a form of self-expression due to how the world is. I was asked: in different conditions in a different environment could punk live? Probably not, because it doesn't have to be at all costs. It's just a reply to the world, to a point in history, culture, evolution but smarter people making smarter and timeless statements, in a better way, in better forms elsewhere. Here you can find primitive sounds and entertaining ideas that go against society. For us it means a lot because we feel the same and we dress the same.

With this reshaped mind I have got a bit into jazz, techno, industrial, noise. I have also found in these genres what I love in punk. The insuperable force that makes us want to cope with this confusing world through creating even more confusing culture. But could we understand anything without culture? Or bear life without ecstasies and catharsis?

Through these new revelations it has become more specific to me what sounds I want to hear, and my attention has shifted from the amount of music to the quality of sounds. I'm on to develop a taste for myself and not like everything that is vaguely reminiscent of the templates of a sub-genre that on paper I really like.

New approaches and the newly discovered fields that I have approached made me purchase more records than I ever did before and out of experience some were purchased blindly. And all those amazing gifts that I have received, new people who I met, bands I have booked, people who I have lost or have become disappointed in. Mostly those who I got to understand.

This was a year just like all the others. Next month I will be back to discuss music.




**There Is No Up Or Down Anymore, Only Forward**

What's up my malaka mates? You miss me? Good riddance 2015, you were a pain of a fuckin' year! Welcome 2016, wishing you all less stress, more sex! Get ready for another installment of my random, intoxicated, self-indulging updates, this time from my grand US exodus: life is too short to be unhappy about the things you can change. So, since my last column two issues ago—and with a countdown clock numbered at forty days—I purged half my shit, boxed up my books and records, took down my posters and left my old Victorian Addams Family house in West Oakland. I went on a drug binge for Halloween, quit my job before Punxgiving, then hosted Punxgiving, saw as many of my friends as possible, and recorded one final *MRR* radio show, part of my Year End Top Ten—more on that in a minute. I postponed all my magazine subscriptions, tried to stay healthy and sober for as long as I possible, then went on one last high-flyin' rave with my *koubaros* Jason Halal to see (by universal coincidence) Bill Kouligas (from Athens, but based in Berlin) work his enchanting, minimal, experimental sound architecture magic. I'd know him from Athens and have been a fan since his then project Family Battle Snake shook the walls of our Katarameno basement circa 2010. He's one of the most interesting people right now making electronic music and curating and supporting projects via his label, PAN Records. If you're a fan of eclectic, electric, forward-pushing unconventionality in the form of sound waves, check out his catalogue at delinear.p-a-n.org.

On December 4th I said my teary-eyed goodbye to my main man Mike and set out on my journey. It has been a crazy 3.5 years and I remained sane in large part thanks to Mike and his support, so I want to officially thank him for everything—a good egg if ever there was one! Life in the Bay is what it is but for me it was time to take care of some business back in Europe, and things aligned in a way they very rarely do. That "once in a lifetime" kinda timing—like when I booked a one-way flight to SF to coordinate this here fabulous

magazine four years go. "Buy the ticket, take the ride."

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I'm sitting at an extremely orderly desk in an equally tidy and organized home—a place for everything and everything in its place. Outside the big bay windows in front of me I can see downtown Toronto and the CN tower, sometimes the tip cloaked in clouds. I'm here to celebrate the union of two amazing people, Dave and *mi hermana* Merm. I'm thrilled to have joined in on the celebration and I could think of no better reason to visit Toronto again; the first leg of my near-month long trip. The ceremony (and champagne) had me teary and but appreciative of all the loving and supportive people I am lucky enough to call friends and family. It's humbling and encouraging to see two dynamic, creative and passionate people decide to build a common future together, a power partnership. Heart-swelling moments, for sure.

On my first night I went to Thirsty & Miserable, a beer bar run by Katie from Brutal Knights, with a great selection of IPAs, ciders and more, and had a couple on my own, happy to catch up with myself. I also went to Aunties & Uncles, twice, where the food is delish, nourishing and homemade. I've been staying with Sandy (from Fucked Up among other projects) who is truly the hostess with the mostess, so grateful for her wonderful hospitality! Hanging out with her and the lovely Nuria from Frau, who (by universal coincidence) was also visiting at the same time, were definite highlights of the trip! I'm also super chuffed that the rad ladies from Shequalizing-x-Distort radio invited me to go on air with them to talk a bit about the upcoming *MRR* festival, Still Not Quiet On The Western Front, which we are putting together for y'all out (t)here at the edge of the world! Check out info at maximumrocknroll.com/fest. CIUT 89.5 FM, where Equalizing-x-Distort radio is hosted, has a wicked, modern set up inside a 100-year-old building on campus at the University of Toronto and it made me want to continue being active in radio and broadcasting—I want the airwaves! You can check out the show at equalizingxdistort.blogspot.ca/2015/12/radio-sunday-december-6th-2015.html.

I got home at 5:45 AM after conducting a fascinating interview with Steph Perry of Equalizing-X-Distort radio. We'd been in touch for years via the magazine but I had never actually met him—I feel honored to tell you the truth that I finally did. During and after the show with Sarde, Chloe, Zoë and Marjie, he and I chatted and picked each other's brain like there was no tomorrow. I had so many questions, every answer of his creating new ones in my brain. "Ugh, I should be recording this! I didn't think to bring my bloody Dictaphone!" "We could always do it in here…" says Steph pointing to the adjacent studio to the one the girls recorded in, everything set up, ready and waiting for us! I had to laugh! So, hour be damned (Steph had to wake up really early the next day for work, what a warrior!) I interviewed Steph and then Steph interviewed me! He has been hosting his own radio show, as well as syndicating *MRR* radio shows, for decades—since *MRR* was sending tapes of the show in the mail. A lifer and big *MRR* fan, he is still impressively active in his support and promotion of both local and international punk music and culture via his radio shows, zines, and more. Did you know he reads *MRR* scene reports and then compiles radio shows with bands mentioned? Did you know he also does a punk music radio special called Notes From Behind the Iron Curtain, a series after my own heart. I have about two hours on Steph and, as soon as I transcribe it, we'll be getting it out into the world for ya! So watch this space and—if you aren't already a big fan—check the show out at equalizingxdistort.blogspot.com.

On my last day I had arranged to get dumplings with Nuria and Ryan of Faith/Void space, and blow me down if (by universal coincidence) our columnist Christina P. wasn't sitting in Mother's Dumplings right there with them! "Is it really *you*?!" Just two days earlier, after connecting on social media, was the first time I saw a picture of her, so I was amazed that she was there in the flesh, in the same city as me! After two-plus years of correspondence it was great to chat "IRL" about life away from home, life in the US, life as a female punk, going to shows, booking shows, cultural differences, cross-cultural divides, boys, bands, boy bands and our upcoming projects. Nothing beats thoroughly good conversation and I feel Christina and I hit it off like a house on fire. I'm going to be asking her a few questions about her label, Blow Blood Records (blow-blood.tumblr.com) so watch this space for more info on that too, and grab a copy of the most recent issue of her zine, *Stitches in My Head Zine*. (stitchesinmyhead.blogspot.com.au)

I had one of Sandy's "golden coldies" (best coffee, hail winter cold-coffee drinkers!) and was also still on West Coast time, so I was feeling wide awake. Who needs sleep when you have ideas? Also, I hadn't yet finished my Year End Top 10 so I tried to work on that, stretching my ex-coord privilege juuust a bit. It had been a pretty decent year (for punk releases anyway) with a lot of neat 7" records, which is my favorite format anyway—along with tapes of course! Maybe you read my obsession list for 2015 in the last issue. If not, and you so feel the urge to do so, you can find that and the radio show I did to go along with it at nemesisknox.com/best-of-2015.

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"I'm taking you to see a time capsule of old New York." Jay Bay Rigas picked me up at LaGuardia Airport and had a special surprise. We drove to the Marine Air terminal, parked the car and pushed through the heavy brass doors, walking into a circular building with art deco details and the old wooden benches from the 1930s still intact. A massive 235-foot circular mural by James Brooks lines the whole wall. Curated under Roosevelt and finished in 1942, it is titled "Flight" and depicts man's relationship to the concept since the beginning of time and up until the modern age. Then, in the 1950s—or so the story goes—in an anti-communist move made by the Port Authority, it got covered up, as some saw left-wing sympathy in Brooks' work. Thankfully, in the 1970s, a historian called Geoffrey Arend managed to get it restored, and what a mural it is! A glimpse into another world. Our next stop was Astoria for another glimpse into a different world: some real ass Greek food! "This place is the worst, but it's really kinda the best." Jason and his best-of-the-worst underground food spots. I was in food heaven. Then a short, windy drive through the forest, jamming Muerte and watching out for deer that might get caught in the headlights.

Jason's house is super cozy. With a beautiful guest room, sunlit garden room and a kitchen any cook would die for, we hung out in our tracksuits (I endorse them!) and did *nada* for the first couple days, which was an ideal time for me to catch up on some writing and emailing. Went to Long Island beach ("On a clear day you can see Connecticut!") then had a triple-decker tuna sandwich for breakfast and—when in Rome—the *worst* Long Island ice tea I've *ever* had in my life (and I've had a fair few) at a typical Greek diner. Chrome forever! Then it was back home to sweatpants and books, homemade Chinese dinner and late night comedy shows. So far from the horrible capitalist collective hysteria that are the Christmas holidays. So quiet!

Eventually, on day three, we left the house and headed for Heaven Street Records in Brooklyn. Blew a bunch of money on records, but didn't care one bit, because music is an investment, it's a relationship, it's a timeline of your life and a companion forever after. I was merrily flipping through records, adding to my Buy Pile—current London sound artist Helm, *Killed By Death* comps, Yugoslavian hardcore, NWONYHC, '80s Spanish techno—when (by universal coincidence) I came across a Hibernation (Greek crust) record just as Jason and I are discussing the Athens scene. Two seconds later, Jason pulls out the Lowest Form EP, just as I was opening up a picture from their recording session, which was happening halfway across the ocean at that very same moment! Is the universe talking to me? Every record was like a clue to some cosmic scavenger hunt, yet finding *me* somehow. I'm not a dedicated record collector, but I'd rather be poor and have books and records fill every inch of my floor and have sublime music flood my shitty basement room, than be rich and void of *duende*—that physical and emotional reaction we have to art, expression and passion; that evoked soul. Those connections made—to the locations, people and physical interactions, and to the words and sounds of the music that colors and underlines our life—they act like knots tying together the fragments of our being; like beacons leading us further down the rabbit hole of experiential discovery.

I wouldn't want it any other way.

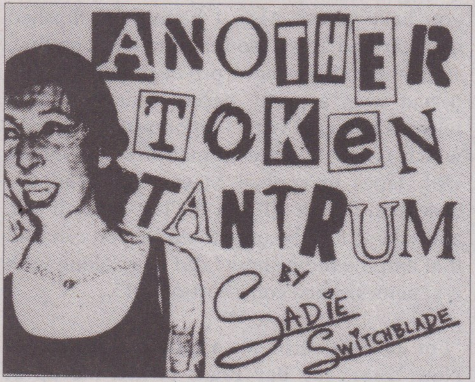
***

I'm sitting by a large window in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. It's early evening and I'm listening to *Velvet Underground & Nico,* the rush hour traffic still loud on the street a few stories below. Even now, so many years after my first introduction, I marvel at what a mesmerizing record it is; a mangle of vulnerable pop tunes and drug-deranged rocker hedonism, two sounds that contrast as they do supplement each other, devour each other and enamor each other. Something dreamy and nightmarish, soft and raw, sparkling and dirty. My thoughts wander, my gaze distracted by the Empire State building, standing taller than the rest on the skyline, lit up in deep red. I keep waiting for it to move, or flash its lights, or to start glowing in Morse code. I swear New York would continue to live on even after you eradicate all the humans. The traffic lights would still blink, the automatic doors would open and close with the passing packs of pets gone wild, the rats would bring dustbins clattering to the ground as they claw into last week's moldy leftovers. Pre-programmed coffee machines across the financial district would brew for no one; 24-hour diner signs would softly buzz in the night as they flash neon pink and blue along the BQE. An unlikely orchestra of modernity.

It's 1:30 AM and I am getting invitations to *go do things*—at this hour! #ThisIsBrooklynNotTheBay I would normally jump at the chance, but I've just come home from a pretty busy day of trekking the Brooklyn asphalt streets and need some sleep, some HoZac. I started with a big breakfast with my lovely hosts Stav and Dana and their hella fluffy felines Gordon and Charlie. Then off to the Acheron for a punk bazaar where my other Greek punk friend Ermis—from the Katarameno Syndromo crew—was selling prints: still frames from Greek cult teensploitation movies from the '80s, but with Greek captions. I was hyper as usual, so I guzzled beer as we caught up on major life events and changes and made little translation cards for the prints: [Distressed Father, also a priest]: "My son, the truth lies in the word of God!" [Punk Son]: "No father! The truth lies in the *Sex Pistols, gé gé?*" Cue son doing a funky dance in his underwear around his bewildered parents then dancing away and out into the street. Taken from *Φυλακές Ανηλίκων (Juvenile Hall,* 1982*).* Check them out at ermisart.com

There I also met up with one of my fave worldies, Dave Rata, who had just moved to Brooklyn a couple weeks before and we chatted over Brooklyn Lagers. East Coast meets West Coast via Texas on the border via Athens via Mexico. We lament the loss of personal quality free time in the age of the constant hustle and agree that being broke and living in a basement in a place like New York is still preferable in our eyes to a lot of other places we've been. After the bazaar, Dave and I head to another bazaar that Santi told us about called the Silent Barn, a short walk away. (Santi is putting out the Chroma record on his label Hysteria Records—very excited! Check out hysteriarecords.bigcartel.com for more info.) When the train roars up above our heads we don't pause for it to go by, we just yell a little louder. We were greeted by a front yard with big picnic tables, benches and a little caravan; walked through the main space with its bar and tables and announcement boards and art up on the wall and loads of zines and colorful people, then to the front where the lending library is situated. A collectively run space, Silent Barn also hosts all-ages shows, among its various activities. After that we moved on to Punk Alley, where a couple of the shops were still open, including the collectively run Better Read Than Dead used Bookstore and Sam Ryser's Dripper World. As Sam put it, "a treasure chest of wonders." Chain smoking, joke cracking and hard hanging with thee Reed Dunlea, Dave and Dave (of Better Read Than Dead books), asking too many questions about everything. Final stop for the night was Molasses Books, a used bookstore that also works as a bar—neat. The next day I went back to Punk Alley to hang out with Avi Spivak and ask him a few questions about his lil' record store called Rebel Rouser, a charming space with an eye-catching interior. Find him at facebook.com/rebelrousershopnyc and stay tuned at this space for more on the upcoming interview! He's a very chill chap, a born and bred New Yorker, and it was great chatting to him over hot toddies about New York history, garage and rock'n'roll music, books and movies and punk aesthetics.

I'm well over my limit, and there's still so much to write about, but I've just lost my passport and I'm flying to the UK tomorrow so… I'll be back next month, reporting from London, Barcelona and Athens, weeping over my keyboard, jamming all my favorite David Bowie records at top volume, drunk on red wine. Live or die trying!




'Sup, dicks? Sadie here to grind her battle-axe some more. Did you miss me last month? No? Good, I didn't miss you either, suck an egg and fuck off already. Mama needed a vacay, okay? Mama needed space to take lavender baths and surround herself with votive candles while SOLANGE *True* played on repeat in the background because this is Olympia, not Boston; it's a goddamn woodland fucking wonderland out here and living with all of these elf-punks has taught me that "self-care" does not in fact mean "slam two forties and roam the vinyl booths of the nearest sports bar menacing patrons with a cinder block," nor does it imply that one's body is merely an alchemist's instrument for distilling watermelon Four Loko into tears. I've learned a little bit of self-worth, and I'm not letting go. I've been getting sleep (I no longer work overnights, just early mornings) and reading books and drinking tea that tastes stupid and looks like little chopped up sticks. I'm a 30-year-old grown-ass woman, and I've got the sunroof in my '99 Honda Civic to prove it, OK?

One of the books I've read recently was Carrie Brownstein's memoir, *Hunger Makes Me A Modern Girl.* I was flooded with sneaky tears during the final chapters; it was moving and interesting to read about DIY Olympia punk in the '90s as filtered through a more "literary" voice. One that was forceful and assured, not riddled with shame the way a lot of punk writing is (mine included). I thought it was well-written and canonical without having that self-aggrandizing coffee-table hardcover feel. Now I'm finally getting around to *Reckless,* Chrissie Hynde from the PRETENDERS' memoir, and damn that lady was bad! Really enjoying these rocker memoirs as of late (though in my opinion neither of the aforementioned compares to Viv Albertine's from last year—every punk needs to read that book.)

Currently I'm sitting in my grotesque orange living room with the members of Boston's LAIKA'S ORBIT pacing around me like anxious animals before they embark on a West Coast tour in support of their debut album, *No Matter What It Takes.* For a little historical context, Laika was a Soviet stray dog who was cruelly blasted into space aboard the Sputnik 2 in 1957 in the name of science. She died of overheating, poor pup. Anyway, LAIKA'S ORBIT plays pop punk with power pop aspirations. It's good, I like it, but go get brunch and get out of my hair so I can write this fucking column, you jackals!

Now then, I had planned on writing a Top Ten, but like I said, I was too busy bathing to talk to you. A literal ass-load of good records came out this year, as though God herself evacuated her milky, perfumed bowels onto us all in a single orgiastic blast. Choosing among them was proving to be a medieval form of torture too excruciating to endure and too laborious to enact, so, whatever. But without playing into the competitive nature of Top Tens, some bands that have been around for a minute really *flourished* this year and level-upped their sound with gut-crunching new releases. I'm thinking mostly of RAGANA's *Wash Away* LP (An Out Recordings), LA MISMA's *Kanizadi* LP (Toxic State / La Vida Es Un Mus), TRY THE PIE's *Domestication* LP (Salinas), and ALL DOGS's *Kicking Every Day* LP (Salinas). Not to mention PURE DISGUST knocked it out

of the park with the *Chained* EP on Katorga Works, which is catchy and crisp and lyrically so fucking relevant. And Kansas City's best kept secret RATS REST might have my favorite song of the year with "Hedonite", the A-side of a 7" single on Starcleaner. Oh, and fucking HEY HALLWAYS's *Absence Makes The Heart Forget* LP (Salinas) was probably the record I flipped the most of all of them—nostalgic, sun-soaked California sounds blended with wistful pop punk filtered through an aural-Instagram "Nashville" (or maybe "Amaro"?!) haze. It makes me long for something unnamable and consistently out of reach, hence the flipping from side A to side B and back again.

New bands that scorched my pasty butt with hot fire in 2015 included FRANKY from Portland, FIREWALKER and DAME from Boston, PROFILE from the Bay Area, and JAENG, PINES, and BOX FAN from Olympia. FRANKY is members of SPETSNAZ playing GAI-style noise punk, and their six-song demo tape is addictive. JAENG is a new heavy D-beat band from Oly with a punishing cassette and 7" forthcoming. I think my only qualm with this band is that the drumming is maybe a little too *good*, giving the demo a bit of a stadium-crust sheen. It's not boring or hollow like WOLFBRIGADE or other "professional" D-beat bands—it's very much unhinged punk music. Live, JAENG is totally unstoppable and disgusting and a little bit scary, as they should be, and I'm excited for them to keep playing and writing.

BOX FAN have been recording new music to follow up their beautiful self-titled cassette from last March. This is haunting, sad but up-tempo two-piece "independent popular rock" (full-disclosure: the drummer, Vicky, is my best friend, and I used to play music with her and Josh from BOX FAN in a short-lived band called LANDLINE). Vicky and Josh sing harmony non-stop on every song, piercing through the fuzz in sync with the minimal, cymbal-less drumming. The lyrics are both concise and pastoral—matter-of-fact and jarring in their simplicity. The entirety of the closing track "Our Ashtray" goes *"This is our ashtray / It's a yogurt cup / It's a place to put our butts."* Word on the street is that they'll be adding cymbals and a bass player, AKA selling out. JK, JK! Check out Josh's closet-label Reflective Tapes for the soundtrack to your dreary winter.

K8Y H8R, a one-woman synth and vocal project, had my favorite stage banter of the year, talking about how "This song is about the social alienation brought on by late capitalism," and then covering "Dancing In The Dark" by BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN, LOL. "Dreem" is one of the best songs ever written about being a trans woman. *"In my dreams, all my clothes fit / my body's not just a to-do list"*. Damn girl, rip my heart right out, why don't you. And *"I wanna be a deer / I want a crystal for a clit."* Like, yes, of course. Of course you do. Speaking my language, honey. All you t-girls reading this, I really recommend Katie's songs.

*smashitdead@gmail.com*

*I'm picking up my baby tonight*
*Though her daddy's makin' troubles, it'll be alright*
*I'm working hard, I don't know why*
*I'm like a working class dog, and I just get by*
—Rock Springfield, "Love is Alright Tonite"

**Like a Stone, Like a Storm**

*Guten tag,* you goofballs! Welcome to your monthly dose of guilty pleasures. Take a break from your "art"-punk. Let go of your angsty, jazz-influenced, political post-rock. Put down the record that uses a Sawzall instead of a guitar. Relax! Pick up some Oi! And if you don't want to buy any of these records you can always just download them on Soulseek. The bands will never know, and that way you can just put them on your iPod and tell people you're listening to the new MOZART record, or G.L.O.S.S. or whatever the hell is acceptable where you live. But you'll know. And you'll feel it...Pride. Respect. A work ethic. Things you've never experienced before. Whole aspects of life that have been dead and fallow will bloom! Embrace it. Live it.

**STARS AND STRIPES – *Planet of the States* LP/CD (Brass City Boss Sounds / Olde Tyme)**

Choke and the rest of the SLAPSHOT crew are back with a new record of Uncle Sam pointing, American flag waving, cheese burger eating, bald eagle crying, VFW pandering, anger-management needing American Oi! It's almost (is?) too much. *Planet of the States* could just as easily be a new album by OIL. The title track, "Planet of the States", kicks off the record, and I can't tell if Jack Kelly is for real or not. Read some lyrics to the title track, *"You all consume American music, movies, and TV / Our food will make everybody as fat as they can be / We'll never have to send another man to fight a war / Cuz our culture already knocked down your front door!"* The chorus is just *"planet of the states,"* over and over. It's actually really catchy. Compared to the last STARS AND STRIPES album, *One Man Army,* this new record is a vast improvement. Their previous release was a letdown after fifteen years of silence and occasional SLAPSHOT covers, the band shat out a soft-serve, pop-street-punk plunker that dealt more with *soccer* and skinhead pastiche than with American pride or anything addressed on 1989's, *Shaved for Battle* (a watershed for the entire genre of Oi!). The new album doesn't come close to *Shaved for Battle,* but it's good and dumb modern American Oi! It pairs well with reading Captain America comics on a Saturday afternoon.

**AGGRESSIVE – *Spit Blood* LP/CD (Sunny Bastards Music)**

First things first: If you record thirteen songs for your LP (one of which is a cover of "Evil" by the 4SKINS, a song that never needs to be covered again), you don't have to include two "bonus acoustic" versions of songs already on the LP. Second things second: There is nothing "bonus" about a track if it appears on both the CD *and* LP. It's just a track on your album. You have to wait, like, fifteen years for Captain Oi! to re-release your first album, and then you can add on any garbage you want on the end. Anyway, I'm just being Oi!nal-retentive…

AGGRESSIVE are a group of German skinheads who play very German sounding Oi! All but one of the songs are sung in English, though that doesn't stop singer Dan from sounding like he bathes in Weihenstephaner Pilsner and brushes his teeth with *zungenwurst.* Like much of the Oi! that comes out of Germany, AGGRESSIVE is heavy on the testosterone and light on the IQ. Songs about drinking, fighting, fighting while drinking, and living on the outside of a society that you hate. (Though I'm not sure how far out you can be if all you do is drink beer and go to work. That's pretty much the de rigueur for a large portion of the world's population.). They have a song about capital punishment for rapists, which I'm down with. The music is fast and borders on hardcore with touches of metal. Similar to RAZORBLADE or TOWER BLOCKS, but not as solid. If you pump iron, watch MMA, love drinking at the *pub* and Bic your head while keeping a thin-chinstrap-beard you should pick up *Spit Blood.*

**SPARROW 68 – *En El Rock And Roll* CD/ digital (self-released)**

Oi! from Mexico! Yeah! SPARROWS 68 are from Mexico City, and these D-Fe hooligans don't disappoint. They channel a refreshingly pure sound that draws on Brit classics, like VICIOUS RUMORS and SKIN DEEP, while mixing in the rock'n'Oi! guitar riffing of PERKELE or AGENT BULLDOG. Only downside of this release is its lack of distribution or promotion. A member of the gang directed me to the band, and the only way to get a copy is to go directly through the band's Facebook. Homeboys need a Bigcartel or bandcamp or something. It's well worth the keystrokes, though. Mexican Oi! bands are few and far between, and it would be a shame if SPARROW 68 is relegated to some *Oi! the Rarities* comp years from now. Don't sleep on this!

**ULTIMA GUARDIA – *Demo* digital**

From the country that's shaped like a boot, ULTIMA GUARDIA adds their name to Italy's long and prestigious history of Oi! From NABAT to KLASSE KRIMINALE, ROUGH to BRUTTI E IGNORANTI, Italy has always been a cornerstone for skinhead music, and ULTIMA GUARDIA keeps the faith on this 4-song demo. The band belts out strong, mid-tempo, and anthemic Oi! with all songs sung in Italian. Like an updated HOPE AND GLORY (minus the ska),

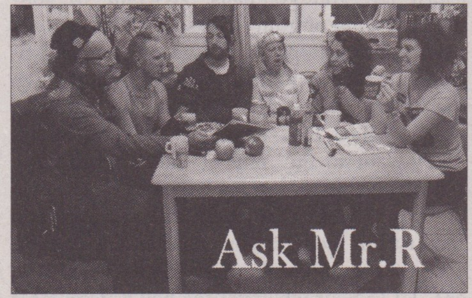
these songs could (should!) be on a 21st century version of *Quelli Che Urlano Ancora*... The band is in the process of recording material for a full album, and if these four songs are an indication of what ULTIMA GUARDIA are capable of, the Gang has no doubt we'll be seeing them on the best of 2016. *Lavoro eccellente!*

**SHAVED HEADS – *Наш стиль* CD (Mangy Little Mut Records/Tough Times Music)**
I reviewed the SHAVED HEADS split with MARTENS ARMY a few months ago, and I'm pleased to have the opportunity to review this, their first proper full-length. We are treated to nine originals plus a cover of POBLERS UNITED "Smack the Hippies" that is transformed into "Smack the Hipsters." As I said last time, there is something about their vocal delivery that reminds me of MOSCOW DEATH BRIGADE. This is hard-Oi! Their sound might be informed by hardcore, but this ain't no hardcore record. *Наш стиль* (translated as *Our Style*) has a sound reminiscent of late 20th century Spanish Oi! bands such as NON SERVIUM, SUBURBAN REBELS, and OI! THE ARRASE. Like some of those Spaniards, these Ruskies are outspoken in their anti-racist views; they wear the badge of S.H.A.R.P. with pride. If we here at Gang HQ had received this album last year, it would have made it on to the "Best of..." list. But we didn't. Hopefully it will be out on vinyl sometime later in 2016. Until then, it will remain the only CD in the stereo. *Na zdorovie!*

**SYNDROME 81 – *Désert Urbain* EP (Destructure / Lost Legion)**
I gotta come clean—this record is not in my hands...yet. *Désert Urbain* dropped last fall over in Europe, but I didn't want to pay €15 for shipping. Thankfully, the sterling studs over at Lost Legion Records decided to press 250 copies for us Yanks. The cover is different, and a dollar per record goes to the French Red Cross, so we got our name in for the pre-order. Yer welcome, France! As far as skinhead "gangs" go, The Gang is probably the most philanthropic—two of our members are Odd Fellows, and another is a janitor at a Children's Hospital. Anyway, back to the "review": The songs on this 7" are forthright, stark, and bitter. The record opens with "Seul Contre Tous," a lament about being stuck in addiction and stuck in the past, and transitions into "Chaque Jour," a song about being stuck in the present. These two songs find SYNDROME 81 going further in *Second Empire Justice* territory, but side A closes out with "Traitre," a minute-long banger that is full on SOA DCxHC. Killer. The flip contains "À Feu Et À Sang" about the siege of Sarajevo, and "Dans Les Rues La Nuit," another dark-Oi! bummer about only being comfortable on the streets. SYNDROME 81 keeps going further down the path of darkness on *Désert Urbain*—there are hints of the SOUND and even the CHAMELEONS (*Dali's Picture demo*). We say go for it! Maybe boys don't cry...but sometimes Skins do.

And that's it! Thanks for reading! Next month, we got more of what you pretend to hate. Ears!

**ENDNOTES:**
1) For Christmas, I received a nose-hair trimmer and a Fitbit. Burn. Other notable moments included my dad getting frustrated about hotel reservations and demanding I just give him "Hotels.com's phone number!" so he could sort it out himself, and while on a six-mile hike in Valley Forge National Park with the whole family, I sharted in my pants. Thanks, Santa! Next year we're celebrating Kwanza so we can have a plausible excuse to skip Christmas.
2) Send your Trauma-Rama stories to AmericanBootGang@Gmail.com. I'll include them if and when I need to pad this column out (I can't just keep copy and pasting lyrics in).




*I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, and we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion column, though...*

**Is my dad punx? He says he likes the Ramones, but he voted for Reagan.**

This question seems important, so I'm answering it immediately. Maybe it's just settling an argument between you and your dad, but maybe you're in the midst of a family crisis. Does your dad think he is a punk, but you are not so sure? Is he trying to bond with you? Do you think he's gonna get a mohawk? Is your dad Johnny Ramone? Well, regardless of the father/son happenstance, I think this issue has touched us all at some point. From the person last year who asked us, "My girlfriend doesn't like the Ramones, should I break up with her?" to every one of us who has been stuck in a square situation (family vacation? work retreat?), or wondered about that corner store guy. ("Is he cool? He was wearing a Ramones shirt that time I went in to buy a Chick-O-Stick.")

I would like to address the subject and once and for all bring everyone to the agreement that those people are just not punks. I mean, they very well *could* be, but not because of that band or that shirt. We are no longer judging people's punk credibility based on whether or not they like the Ramones. It's over. 2015 was the cut-off year, and now you've gotta work for it. Things have changed, okay? Like those people on social media who defend misogynistic, racist, hateful shit, and back it up by saying "punk is about pissing people off"? I think all of you have some outdated information.

At a certain point, we grew out of using punk as a way to express a blanket of anger, and instead are doing our best to focus it out of our community and on to the actual oppressive bullshit we seek to change. Being an asshole is not punk, and neither is owning a t-shirt of a band that broke up twenty years ago. Step up your game, *Dad*.

**Dear Mr.R,**
**How do I get my yuppie boyfriend to stop talking about how bourgeois I must think he is all the time? I just want someone to take me out to mid-priced noodle joints and pay for drinks and fuck me good. Can I live?**
**Yours,**
**Sleeping with The Enemy**

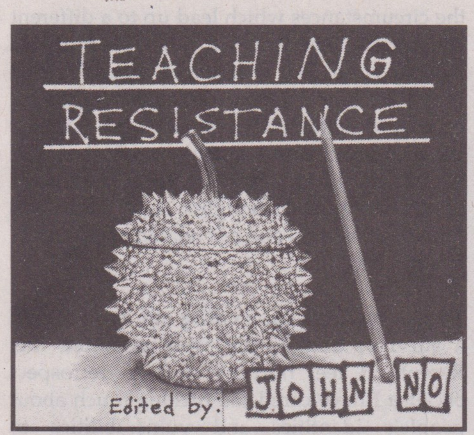
It's too bad this guy didn't get himself a Ramones shirt or something when people still might've mistaken him for a punk. I bet he could've afforded one of those nice ones from the mall that are already old and soft before you buy them, too, but oh well, deadlines are deadlines. If this is about him comparing himself to you and not being your equal, it could serve as a midpoint between who he is and who he thinks you are.

To get him to stop bringing it up, you should figure out why he is saying it in the first place, then see if there is a solution to that issue. There could be a couple reasons he might be pushing the subject. The most obvious assumption would be that he is 1) Insecure about appearing super bland and normy next to the chill, non-square world you're coming from. If that is true, the simplest remedy would be to make him feel comfortable and appreciated in the relationship, as though you are both on equal footing. This takes a lot of time and reassurance. I don't know how invested you are in this person, but this is kind of a long solution.

That may not be the solution you are looking for in the event that he is 2) Addicted to reassurance. Maybe he is the kind of guy who always wants you to say, "No, no, no, I don't think of you like that, you're wonderful," which I guess you *could* decide to do if the drinks are truly abundant. This isn't the same thing as being on equal footing in a relationship, though. Seems like not really better than a day job to me, but some people are in a relationship for the nurturing, like the exclusive idea of what they can do *for* another person.

Some people 3) Fetishize the idea of being a clean-cut yuppie guy who is dating, feeding, and fucking a punk person. Though theoretically disgusting, this sounds like truly the best possible outcome to your query. This is the one where you can just tell him to stop fucking worrying about it and make with the noodles.

*It's a whole new year with a whole new set of problems. We'll sort that shit out. Text to 510-585-HELP. Send emails to: askmrr@mail.com.*




*All teachers who have more than one pupil work with a diverse body of students who have different backgrounds, needs, learning styles, and methods of effective communication. It is very much part of our gig to figure out how to best reach every student individually, so at the very minimum they know the door to learning is being kept open for them; and there are a few useful techniques we learn for accommodating a diversity of student learning styles in our graduate teaching programs (along with a heaping helping of lip service and tokenism).*

*Most teachers, however, realize they have a much more complex task at hand when they actually step into the classroom and attempt individualized instruction. Some teachers work with student populations where individualized instruction isn't something solely for a few struggling or exceptional students, but rather the only way to reach* any *of your students. You will find that quite a few of these teachers also happen to be punks, because our entire culture is essentially a cult populated by beautiful weirdos who see the world differently from everyone else.*

*This month's Teaching Resistance is by Ash, who teaches very young (five to seven year old) children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in urban England. She also plays in some bands you may have heard of like Frau and Good Throb, and she helps make pretty rad things happen in the London punk scene.*

I teach year one children with severe ASD in an inner London school. I have seven students who are all killer people. Their learning happens at a painstakingly slow pace sometimes and that's fine. There are benchmarks that neurotypical children will reach before the age of two that some of my students are still working towards and that's fine. It's all fine because at school, at least, we don't exist in the neurotypical world, we exist in the realm of the spectrum. And that's great. Because fuck integration politics, ASD is something that clearly (to me) demands that we change ourselves, our environments and our teaching methods to be personalized to each individual child.

Going backwards from that list, let's look at teaching methods. First, change the learning experience so it becomes visual, kinaesthetic and relevant to that child's needs—once you know the child, that's easy enough. We do this in punk too, right? We encourage new bands to be experimental, we celebrate the addition of a hammer against a bell because when that thing hits we feel like, "fuck, I see." Experiences are vital to our understanding, otherwise it's just something that looks questionable on paper. I could say I saw Asesinato Del Poder play one of the toughest gigs I've ever seen in a basement in France, but unless you were there you won't know what it felt like to stand in that room with your fists balled into the side of your ribs so hard you thought you'd puncture a lung and possibly die happy and angry all at once, screaming "*INFIERNO.*" Second, change the environment. My class is a low-stimulus room (and we have a playroom, and a separate workroom, and two outdoor pods—but who's bragging? Did I mention this is a state funded school? Who loves ya, Hackney?) and that's exactly what each child needs. Then they are way more able to focus on me and my teaching, ergo themselves and their learning. In punk we make our environments as open and safe as possible right? Right? Right?

Now the first thing I mentioned is what I mostly want to talk about in this article. This is the big one. Changing myself is something I've been learning to do slowly and begrudgingly over a long period now. Punk shows us that you either stick with something that's already there (oh hey, your band sounds like Discharge, cool) or you steer off course and make something new (oh, your band is a gothy plus-sized Greek woman singing about nightmares, hello dream lover; Efialtis is my girlfriend). Either way, changing ourselves is something that to do actively we have to struggle with. To be reflective enough to say, "I don't know what I'm talking about here" or "Maybe if I tried to be less A, I wouldn't suffer so much B." Whatever the thing that you don't really want to admit about yourself is, be assured that to be truly reflective that stuff is gonna come up and you'd better be prepared to look at it if you want to handle your shit and change yourself. To look at yourself under a glaring light of "how do I make me better?" isn't anything new—women have been taught to be self-critical from birth so in a way perhaps we have an advantage with this—but it's important to remember that there is a history to your thought patterns, your responses and reactions, the way you organise yourself and the lifestyle you have chosen. The point is to have an objective. You can't reshape all of that history, but you might be able to understand how it has left you and choose which specific parts of that might need tweaking, fiddling with or just straight carving the fuck out.

Things like misogyny for instance. You might not know that it's there until you're faced with someone saying that you did a fucked up thing. You might not have even seen your actions as harmful at the time or even a few months down the line. You still might not really understand what all the fuss is about when people stop wanting to hang out or won't really look you in the eye at shows anymore all because one time this one girl said that one thing about this total non-event that you didn't even think twice about. That's something you might want to get the carving knife out on—I give you permission to bleed over this one. Just 'til you think it's all gone, then I'm gonna need you to go for regular check-ups in the mirror with a hefty dose of "what am I bringing to the world and why?"

What about validation? We all seek that in a myriad of interesting ways. You ever stop to ask why? You ever stop to question if it's meaningful—or purposeful or harmful and how? And again, *why*? You ever just stop?

At work I have to be reflective. Anything less is a disservice to the community I work in. I guess my question is why this isn't more of the norm in punk—and I don't mean sitting around discussing intersectionality (though *hi*, that's always good). I mean looking deeply into yourself, the words you say, the body you control, the actions you choose and the cultures within cultures that you promote. You feel okay with them all? A good teacher is always reflecting, I reckon a decent punk will be too.

*The Teaching Resistance column is designed to provide a platform for radical, punk-affiliated, subversive teachers/educators to share their ideas and draw attention to important issues around education; particularly compulsory and community-based education. If you are a teacher (anywhere in the world) for students of primary or secondary school ages (K-12), community colleges, or alternative learning arrangements such as collectivist free schools, and you want to submit an idea for a column, please write an email to teachingresistance@gmail.com. There is also an archive for this column which can be found online at teachingresistancearchive.blogspot.com.*

Hey Weirdos, so these are the questions that the "holidays" brought up for me: Am I actually Belle from *Beauty and the Beast*? Am I that cliché of a book lover? Aren't I a beast, too? Is reading mostly entirely better than writing? But how would we have things to read if we only read? Do we relive and work through trauma thematically? Do we need breaks? Is it possible to be traumatized more in time than in space? What does it take to tell the truth?

Not saying I can answer all these in this installment of Beast's Lame Couch, but intention setting is everything. Happy. Fucking. New. Year.

To my relief, that cold and slippery span from Solstice to the last day of Kwanzaa heralded the return of me being a person who reads voraciously. I hope it doesn't go away. I'm not saying that I'm a person who hasn't read since I was sixteen, but I used to be a person who wished that the spaces between social

engagements, the car rides to the hospital or the next city, and the hours before sleep hits or before days start were longer so that I didn't have to put the book down. Maybe college kills that in a person. Maybe it's book specific.

I can remember it happening most clearly during wonderful depressions. Exciting depressions. Languishing times. Tempests. Snow, rain, blood, tears. Something I thought was love. It happened with the *Twilight* series after I started having sex when I was sixteen. No, I do not understand the connection. Or it was every YA lesbian novel I could find. I do understand that connection. Neil Gaiman. Fairytales, old and new.

When I finally came up gasping for air during the start of my college thesis, when all the required classes were gone and it was only my parched desire and soggy brain left, when my boyfriend had dumped me because he couldn't bring himself to have sex with this body after all, it was the book *Till We Have Faces* by C.S. Lewis that gave me life. Lady, is that book beautiful. Beauty and the Beast all over again (that's what Cupid and Psyche became), but also introspective, not didactic or moralistic. Somehow Lewis gushes about god(s) without being moralistic. Thank gods.

After graduation, when I had hopped in a car down to New Orleans and it rained for a month and I got the call that my dad had cancer and that maybe he didn't have much time left, it was *The Hunger Games* that complemented my strict daily regimen of Mad Dog 20/20—beginning at 5 PM, a different color for every day of the week. As usual, I would like to thank my housemates of that time, Luka, Sophie, Ben, and Nico, and my dear friend and access support Carmen, for making all of that possible. Luckily, my dad is still alive and well, my liver still works, and now I feel superior to people only familiar with *The Hunger Games* movie franchise, or believe that it is anti-revolution, when in fact it is largely anti-statist.

Most recently it was *Kindred* that did it to me. It made me want to read whenever there was a free or not so free moment. It brought me back to childhood, reading in the car home from dance rehearsal over the George Washington Bridge at night with my dad yelling, "You're going to ruin your eyesight, Bea! Wait 'til we're home!" I love longing to read like that. My queer family and I have been on a two-week road trip to visit family and more family throughout the Northwest but mostly Seattle. I thought that reading a book about a Black woman in the '70s who is non-consensually forced to time travel to the early 1800s every time one of her white ancestors needs something in the antebellum South would ruin me for just about all non-Black company, and make me feel fretful and teeth gritty and nauseous and defensive like the November of last year after my accident and the Darren Wilson not-guilty verdict in the shooting of Mike Brown, but in fact it opened me up to myself. What a thing it is to be ready, in some sense. I'm glad I read *Kindred* now, but also I wish I had been reading it every year of life.

There is something that novels do that nonfiction cannot. I've been caught in a political non-fiction and queer memoir loop for a couple years, helping myself remember that writing about yourself doesn't have to be boring or ineffectual. It has helped, and I highly recommend such deeply punk offerings as *The End of San Francisco*, *Lessons in Taxidermy*, and *My Awesome Place*, but novels are necessary. Especially novels with unfathomable fantastical agony and redemption. Although the premise of time travel is currently fiction (please just let me have hope), the idea that one could be scarred by the human evils of the past and the traumas of one's ancestors is speculative and not entirely unlikely. Barring a thorough book report, I have to say, everyone who hasn't already done so needs to read Octavia Butler. People of color definitely need to, and white people need to and then need to do more research and more contextualizing for themselves of everything she brings up, and then they need to ask a Black person permission to talk about her work and learn about whether or not they actually understood it. Some of my reparations involve a book report on Octavia Butler.

In addition to teaching me a lot about how intimately and precisely the context of being the descendants of slaves in this country affects all Black people/Black culture, *Kindred* brought up other questions for me. Following the thread of Franz Fanon, whose psychological and social theory posits that there is a collective unconscious specific to Black experience, could there be an experience of time, of chronosystems at large, that is specific to various kinds of marginalized people?

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Lately, I have been triggered primarily around time—how long it takes me to do something as a disabled person. It makes me feel incredibly defensive and enraged having able-bodied people comment on my slowness, lateness, or on the merit of whatever I'm wasting time doing that they don't understand, or how long it's taking me to explain something related to my experience of access or ableism. They go in strange waves, these triggers. Like the thing that makes me most mad will last for several months and then fade, and then another thing will come up. And they always feel connected to a specific age. Like I am time traveling. Last year I was sixteen, this year I'm six. My family and teachers often thought I had poor spatial awareness, but that's not true. I have had ingrained poor temporal awareness, because my body takes different time than yours, and to relate that to laziness, passive aggression, or a lack of ambition is a failure of imagination. Luckily, the people currently in my life are listening to me. And giving me all the time I need.

We make these jokes about colored people time (please don't actually say that if you are white), queer time, punk time, etc., but what are the circumstances which lead up to a different conception/experience of time? And is it a leading up to? Is it so linear or chronological? Why is the time it takes to do something hard or process something deep so taken for granted? Why should there be a standard of what is or what is not fucking hard or deep? (Not a sex thing.) Continued thoughts about time and space both related and not related below, sorry to end on a cliff.

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**Trigger warning for coming out about being a survivor and outing who assaulted me:** Recently I feel hurt by time in retrospect because I have cared too fucking much about people's identities and vulnerabilities to out them as having sexually assaulted me. I agree with Sadie's January column that it is ineffectual and a failure of imagination to exile people from communities without a word, and to airbrush definitions of sexual assault from afar without getting into the nitty gritty of consent and nonconsent, and I also agree with Zoë Dodd in her interview from December that we pay more attention to perpetrators than we do to survivors.

In radical/punk communities, there are often periods of time in which it is deemed appropriate to call people out, and times when it is deemed inconvenient, irrational, or just plain insulting because of whoever that person is or who they represent. Unfortunately, the time it takes to tell the truth, the time it takes to heal, and the times when we are assaulted do not work on a nice schedule. It took me two years to finally tell my story about how a disabled, trans, brown once-friend of mine hurt me, and although that was the time I needed to heal, it was also the time it took for it to become possible in queer society for that kind of call-out. Unfortunately, identity should never cancel out accountability. We shouldn't have to be so worried about the already possibly crushing isolation of being brown, trans, and disabled all at once, that we cannot ask people to examine themselves as they free themselves, and to not oppress others in the process of getting free. Unfortunately, the parallel histories of violence that we and our peoples have experienced do not make it impossible for you to harm me. It just gives us that many fewer or more tools to deal with it. We must continue to cultivate the space for simultaneity of experience and reality, and the patience and time for it, too.

**Inaccessibility shout-out:** Two-door cars and twelve-hour road trips (though we do this to ourselves and we work with what we have and we do it in style, albeit in pain).

**Accessibility shout-out:** Four-door (automatic shutting), mom-as-fuck minivans and accessible parking. Communication about access needs and growing, complex understandings of one another as friends and family. Fuck yeah, it was actually a great winter holigay.

**ENDNOTES:**

1) Thank you Plastic Caves, Bethlehem Steel, and Vagabon for providing excellent gifts to

my strange, dark, and sappy loved ones.
2) My birthday party was luckily accessible and friendly to many. An aesthetic beauty, a labor of access supported love, and a fundraising success for Sins Invalid. Thank you Lesley of LoBot and all those who keep that space running, and thank you to all who helped me put on a great spectacle! You are gorgeous from H2T!
3) Do you have a current and or new doomy epic screamo band you are excited about? If this is not your thing, I am not at all surprised, but also I am because that is my happy place and I would like to hear some new shit before I am forced to start a band everyone will be slightly embarrassed to love.

*Email me: foxlovesriver@gmail.com.*

**Why Would Anyone Give a Shit About a Presidential Election?**
by Mimi Soltysik, the Socialist Party USA's Presidential Candidate

We should. But not insofar as candidates X, Y or Z are concerned. Even if any of the candidates running for office made the welfare of the people a priority, their hands are tied by an economic system that prohibits any substantive move toward peace, justice, and equality. That's not hyperbole; that's a fact. And I suspect the candidates (most of them, at least), are well aware of that fact. This whole deal is a game, and the people are pawns. As long as you are sufficiently placated, all is well in the world of capitalist politics. And that fucking sucks.

I think most of us know that our tax dollars finance the murder of anyone who stands in the way of U.S. access to resources. How does having the blood of innocent folks on my hands feel? I think most of us know that our tax dollars finance the slaughter of people of color in our communities. How does having the blood of innocent folks on my hands feel? I know that our military budget exceeds the budgets of the rest of the world's industrialized countries by an unthinkable margin, and I know that money could and should be used to finance health care and education. How does that make me feel? I know that the planet is being destroyed by the quest for acquisition, for profit. How does that make me feel? I'm fucking livid. But I didn't always feel this way...

I grew up in Southeast Pennsylvania, obsessed with skateboarding and punk rock. Fugazi, Sonic Youth, the Bad Brains, Bill Danforth, Mike Vallely, Mark Gonzales, they were gods. I also had a really good handle on how to get in trouble at school and with the law. As a teenager through my early 30s, I played in a rock band. I added substance abuse to my resume and found my health failing by my mid-twenties. Truth is, I didn't give a shit about anybody or anything. I found politics boring at best. I just wanted to get fucked up, regardless of what my doctor had to say. By my early thirties, I hit the proverbial "rock bottom," in extraordinary pain, physically and emotionally. I'm sincere when I say that I forgot how to learn. When I tried to think about anything more complex than putting food in my mouth, I'd often cry. It took a lot of work to figure out how to put one foot in front of the other. Eventually, I started to clear my head. Shit, I even opened a bank account. And perhaps for the first time since I'd been a little kid, I felt like I could hear the words people said to me.

Soon enough, I started to find my way to the streets of my community. This time around, the words of the people, the looks on their faces, it all hit me like a baseball bat to the face. At the time, I knew very little about socialism and/or radical politics. I read *The Communist Manifesto* in high school because I thought it'd make me look cool. I think I started smoking, drinking, and doing other things to look cool as well, but that's another story. In any case, my wife and I started to put together a group of folks who were interested in doing something helpful with their free time. We organized clothing drives for survivors of human trafficking in greater LA and bicycle drives for children in South LA.

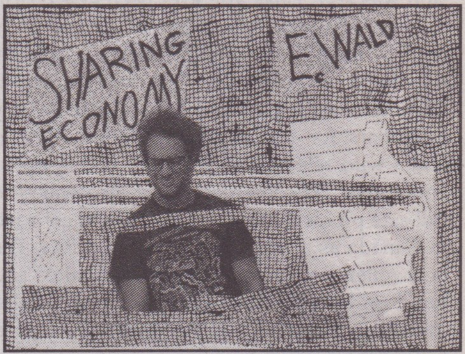
Every time we'd meet a director from an area non-profit, they'd consistently say that they felt like their work was like trying to fight cancer with cough syrup, or some variation of that. I mean, the work is essential, and there is certainly the need. But I was wondering about where I might be able to go to fight the cancer. In some ways, I felt like I had a new toy to play with as my head was starting to clear a bit from the years of abuse, so it seemed like a good time to consider learning again. From that point on, it wasn't long before I started to understand that capitalism bears the responsibility for the suffering I was seeing in my community, whether in L.A., in the rest of the country, or the rest of the world. Again, it was like a baseball bat to the face. And as I kept finding that the critiques of the capitalist system were substantiated, it became harder and harder to bury my head in the sand, as if what I was seeing and hearing was inconsequential. The pissed-off punk rock kid was still roaming around inside, but now I was gaining a little direction and a little clarity. And as I'd spent so much of my life trying to erase myself, I felt, more than a little bit, that I had some catching up to do, that maybe it was time for me to engage humanity. So I did.

Back to the point, the purpose of this piece. I've been a member of the Socialist Party USA for the past five years. When it came time to consider the presidential election, an exercise I generally find to be farcically tragic, I began to wonder if it might be possible to flip that exercise on its head. As a radical U.S. organization determined to destroy capitalism and its inherent oppressions, it's not as if mainstream media is beating down our door. We're largely irrelevant as far as the media is concerned, that is, until the general election rolls around.

So, in acknowledgement that we'd be receiving a bit more of the public's focus if we ran a ticket, and considering the heightened focus on socialism as a result of the Sanders candidacy (Sanders is another discussion for another time), it seemed to make some sense to put something forth that served to, in a no-holds barred fashion, attack capitalism and the bullshit put forth by the capitalist party candidates. Most importantly, given the focus we receive during an election, it seemed reasonable that there might be a way to plug those who are newly interested in socialism/radical politics directly into movement work in their communities. The kinds of revolutionary changes needed to deliver for the working class can't and won't happen in D.C. The system won't allow it. To do so would be to destroy the system, and too many powerful folks have a vested interest in maintaining their power. But, we can topple this behemoth by establishing new roots with strong local networks throughout the country.

I reached out to Milwaukee's Angela Nicole Walker, who completely knocked me on my ass when she ran for Sheriff of Milwaukee County as an open socialist (google Angela—I think she'll knock you on your ass as well), to see if she'd be interested in working with me on this project. Thankfully, she accepted. And here we are. The number of folks supporting this idea, of using a presidential campaign to help build community networks, to shed light on the amazing work being done at the local level, to help facilitate the development of new organizing relationships, is growing rapidly. So many of the folks joining the ranks are, like me, folks who have felt like "get that shit out of my face" when the general election rolled around every four years. But they're here, and they are getting involved. To me, that's punk as fuck.

*See socialistparty-usa.net for more information on the Soltysik/Walker presidential campaign.*




**Road Doggin' with TSA and Asthma: Part Two**
*For those just picking up: my teenage hardcore band (composed of four grown men in their mid-twenties*

*at this point) and our friends' sludge band toured this winter/fall in the Northwest. It was a six-day tour and somehow it has taken me two issues to cover. Here is the second half.*

**Saturday, November 21, Blaine/Vancouver:** When last we checked in, a Canadian border agent (his last name was Silcox, which I had trouble remembering at the time) was holding my phone when I got a text from my dad telling me to "ditch the herb". The text mentioned his concern about having the car impounded or something, which I would have dismissed if the text itself hadn't spurred an inspection of the minivan.

At this point I had to turn back around to the rest of the crew and explain the car was getting inspected. Dariel, our roadie, was getting antsy. He went to the vending machine, put in a dollar and got a bag of chips and some change in return. He then said loudly, "I can't believe I gave this machine some good *American* money and got this bullshit *Canadian* change back". We told him he had to cool it. He then went up to a border agent and asked if there was a smoking section.

There was no weed in the car. TSA drummer and *MRR* shitworker Eli G. did have to flush half a joint he had in his pocket however. The border's main concern seemed to be the venue we were playing, a long-standing punk house in Vancouver. I had assumed they wouldn't let us in if it turned out we were playing an actual club, and went to great lengths to assure them we were playing a house show (I said house party to make it even more clear that we weren't getting paid). At some point the agent determined that the house was a "real venue"—and based on that decided to let us through. The whole process was stressful, confusing, banal—probably the best you can hope for at the border.

We listened to the Rolling Stones and Boston Strangler on our way into Vancouver. It's about a half hour from the border, and having the roads measured in kilometers rather than miles has a way of skewing your perception of time on the road, particularly in the dark. By the time we got into the city, we all had to pee. Our first stop was 7-11. Have you ever been to a 7-11 in Canada? I had not. It is a different scene entirely than in the US. The candy selection is huge; they have candy bars from all over the British Commonwealth (I forgot to take back Dairy Milk bars for my anglophile fam out here) and a wild selection of gummies taking up an entire aisle. At some point they also scaled in full-size pizzas. I think it is possible to get a job in Canada as a 7-11 pizza delivery driver. The heat rollers are home to not only taquitos and hot dogs but also a variety of rotating kebabs, including meatballs. I left perplexed and peed behind the dumpster.

After that stop and another stop at the liquor store (where we all found our debit accounts had been frozen and had to negotiate cash currency exchange in a seemingly-unending line) we made it to the house. We played the basement. Crazy Bugs, who set up the show for us, played first and slayed. Their guitarist has a sick skate punk-meets-Saints style, and their vocalist has this piercing and bottomless wail, all coming together for ultimate in hardcore confusion.

Great hosts too. After the show they took us to a rave that was happening at Red Gate, which was the closest place we could buy beer or weed after 11:00 PM. Eli and Trevor hadn't smoked in like six hours, so things were getting desperate. The rave hadn't quite filled out when we got there, but I am firmly convinced that Trevor single-handedly got it *live*. Trevor has been making house music under various monikers (DJ Vran, 4J LTE, Trefuck) for a long time—long before house and techno somehow wriggled into the punk zeitgeist—and he was in his element. Long stints on the dance floor were occasionally broken up with frank conversations about the Olympic Village development debacle and skyrocketing rents in Vancouver and San Francisco alike.

Sooner or later it was 2:00 AM and it was decided we might as well just stay there for the night. By 3:00 AM everyone but Dariel, Trevor and I had taken up the couches (the music was still *loud*) so we had to keep dancing until the rave ended, some time around 5:30 AM.

**Sunday, November 22, Vancouver/Tacoma/ Seattle:** I woke up some time around 11:00 AM. Never have I felt so fucked up—I wasn't hungover (didn't want to think I'd be hungover at least), but I felt weak in all the muscles and limbs of my body, my head throbbed, my thirsty lips cracked like the soil of the central valley. At some point before we pulled up to eat lunch on Hastings St. we realized that we hadn't really eaten anything at all (besides 7-11 candy) in the last twenty-four hours—six of which were spent dancing. We ate ravenously and walked around a bit. I popped into Horses Records to drop off some tapes while Eli G threw up on an abandoned foosball table in the alley behind the store.

Leaving Canada was a lot easier than entering. I don't even remember if they looked at our passports. We dropped off Trevor at our friend's house in Seattle so he could take an exam online for one of his classes, then went back to Tacoma to pick up Gabby (our other roadie, who had to stay behind since she did not have a passport).

That night we played at the Black Lodge. It was interesting to see this DIY space continue to flourish while construction on the newest Amazon campus blossomed just down the hill, on the other side of the block even. It was my first time seeing the space; it was really impressive. Even the calendar of Olympic peninsula punk gigs spoke to an ethos of collaboration or organization up there that made me feel a little jealous on behalf of the bay.

Also impressive: Nasti, a new-ish band splitting members between Olympia and Seattle. They played last, combining freaky, squalling guitars with jerky rhythms and dropping at least one massive dirge of a track towards the end of their set. They have a tape out on Perennial that I encourage tracking down, and I hope they deliver on their promise of touring this year.

**Monday, November 23, Seattle/Olympia:** Olympia was the last show of this short tour, so our last couple days allowed for some leisure time. So we took the town by storm, eating free pizza courtesy of a friend of Asthma's, and then going across the street to Singles Going Steady where I continued my quest to collect the complete discography of Watery Love. After that we went to eat dim sum and congee in what signs labeled the international district—a weirdly Ballardian name for a neighborhood—and ended our time hanging out at a lottery bar next to the train station. We left in the nick of time, just before the Monday Night Football crowd got riled up. We did hit some traffic on the way to Olympia, but made it to Obsidian in time for the gig.

We played with a band called Old Man. (Did you know that Eli G and I used to be in a band called Old Men? Don't look it up.) A pretty killer noise rock three-piece. Just a drummer, a bassist, and a singer who was, unencumbered by any guitar, free to roam the grounds unhinged. We lingered on the strip long enough to get some tater tots, then crashed at Riley from Nasti's pad. I was unable to convince any of my bandmates to drink the cursed well water of Olympia, so we left pretty early the next day after eating a fucked up breakfast at the Reef.

**Tuesday, November 24, Olympia/Dunsmuir:** After a long drive and another stop at SeQuential Biofuels, we reached the pass. There was snow, and for a few stretches I could see barely fifteen feet in front of me while driving, but we drove slowly and cautiously and made it back into California without incident.

Rather than try to hustle all the way back to San Francisco in one trip, we managed to find a good deal on some cabins in Dunsmuir, CA, maybe an hour from the border and just south of Weed. After a week of sleeping on floors it was a great relief to know that all nine of us would be sleeping on beds for the night, or couches at least. We stocked up on groceries and spent the night making enchiladas, watching cable TV (the end of the Warriors-Lakers game and most of *Sister Act 2*), and giving each other tattoos.

**Wednesday, November 25, Dunsmuir/ Redding/San Francisco:** We packed up pretty early—Marisela from Asthma had to continue driving on to Los Angeles to make it down in time for Thanksgiving with her family. Our minivan had enough luxury time to stop for some food and coffee in the bullshit town of Redding, CA. Even the Taco Bell here had some menacing vibes. We ate quickly and left with a sense of haste. Well, the rest of the drive was uneventful. We made it back to the city just before rush hour. On a limb, I decided to drop

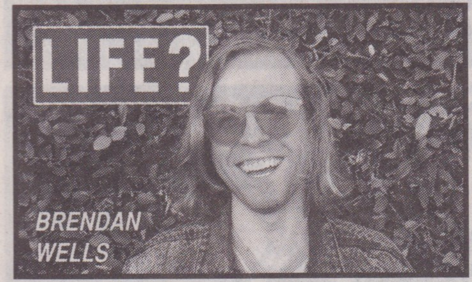
by the Twin Peaks lookout after dropping off Eli G at his car. Surrounded by tourists, I roamed around the top of the city, wondering how I could feel so worn out after what felt like such a short week. I was glad to be home, but felt like I could have kept on driving.

**ENDNOTES:**

1) We have a new t-shirt! Inspired by a conversation on post-coital etiquette with our dear friend Scott Moore and designed by visual artist Jess Scott (also of Flesh World/Brilliant Colors/Index renown), it is sure to become an absolutely essential part of your wardrobe. Order it here: store.maximumrocknroll.com.

2) Next month in Sharing Economy: an "After the Gig Economy" special featuring interviews with real punks about their work in San Francisco's virtual economy. Punks and rockers of all kinds of taken to the flexible schedules of "sharing economy" jobs (working as Instacart shoppers, Postmates couriers, even ridesharing drivers), but how exactly does one negotiate this compromise with the Bay Area technocracy? A job's a job, but how's the gig? Meet the new face of the service industry in our next episode.

*Get in touch if you have anything you want to share: eli@maximumrocknroll.com.*




I've been asked "So, what brings you here?" a lot this week. I don't know, man. I was just trying to go to the art museum with John Birkner. I'd already been to the Mark Mothersbaugh exhibit at the Minneapolis Institute of Art three times, but Lumpy and the Dumpers were in town, and Martin and John wanted to check out the Mothersbaugh exhibit the morning after their big show at the Secret Service. I tried to give them directions, but they couldn't figure it out because neither of them has a smart phone. "Just drive west on Lake and pick me up in the McDonald's parking lot."

We were at the museum about fifteen minutes when we ran into Ben and Shivaun. They were there with Grace, who was visiting from San Francisco to see family. Ben and Shivaun introduced us and someone said "Hey, you should be a coordinator at *Maximum Rocknroll.*" I had no idea what was going on, but I said "Nice to meet you," and Grace seemed alright, so I said "OK" and now I live in San Francisco and I'm a content coordinator at *MRR*.

It wasn't exactly as easy at that—this all started six months ago. There was a questionnaire that took forever to fill out and then I got grilled over the phone for an hour and a half to see if I knew what punk was and what I would do if I lived at the *MRR* house and the toilet flooded. I told them I know how a toilet works and now I'm editing zine reviews and taking online practice tests to remember how to use commas. I've lived here a week, but I haven't really gotten out much to see San Francisco yet. It's kind of because I don't know anybody, but it's not like I'm going to meet anyone besides record reviewers unless I do leave (all the record reviewers I've met are very nice, though). I'm sure getting a part-time job will help me get out—tiki bar bartender, barista that doesn't have to go to work until the afternoon, and steampunk shoeshine boy are all possible at this point. Reach for the stars.

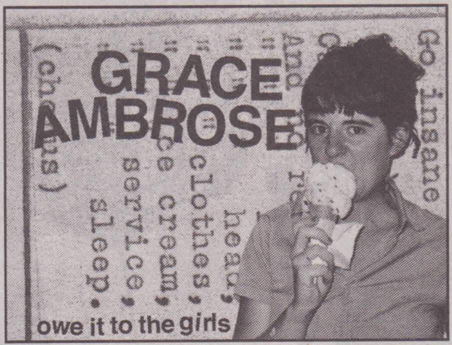
Moving away from Minneapolis wasn't easy. It had me a confused, anxious mess until I finally left town. I was having a blast playing music with my friends in Solid Attitude, Uranium Club, and the Luxury Units. I loved my job at the public library, and I had started dating someone who lives in Kansas City (what's another 1,400 miles onto a relationship that's already long distance anyway? Woof…). I've moved even farther away from Iowa City now, a beautiful town with great, creative people where I first started playing in bands, booking shows, and making zines. Iowa City was where I got to sing in a punk band for the first time, with NERV, which still might be the most rewarding thing I've done in my life.

But how could I turn down the chance to help publish the world's largest punk zine? Why not step my game up, work hard, and try to contribute in a meaningful way to a community and culture that is so important to me, and in the context of independent publishing, a place I've always wanted to be. It's a no-brainer, really. It's hard to leave Minneapolis and an incredible, creative DIY scene where I feel comfortable, inspired, appreciated, and loved by my friends. I was even getting half-off breakfast at Modern Times when I went with my friend Whitney. There is no hook up more crucial!

I'm sad to leave, but I couldn't be more excited to be starting the work here at the magazine. It was intimidating to think about contributing to something as important as *MRR*, but if being a punk has taught me anything it's that you meet amazing people with the same interests as you who will help you do what you love doing, so thank you to anyone who has done anything to keep *MRR* going long enough for me to be here now. Thank you to anyone who has booked my bands or bought my zines and made me feel like punk is worth spending time in.

I made it out of Minneapolis early enough to avoid below-zero weather, but the *MRR* house is cold enough right now to remind me of my roots. If you can get me a job at a library in San Francisco, or if you live in the Midwest and your band sounds like teenagers trying to do Wire covers, get in touch.

*brendan@maximumrocknroll.com*




So many columns this month that I'm left with a teeny tiny amount of space! There's going to be quite a bit of turnover in these pages in the next few months. Really glad to have Ralph Rivera of Not Normal on board as a new columnist, this month giving us glimpses of the best and brightest of "The Lower Third." Ralph has always seemed like a no-nonsense dude to me, and I'm excited to see what he'll do with a monthly soapbox here. I'm a True Believer, are you? My band Mozart and his band the Bug are gigging together soon as part of the *MRR* fest. Can't wait.

We'll be bringing on a bunch of other new columnists soon, so if you think you should have a chance to talk to (at) the punks every month (or every other!), get in touch now with your ideas.

To start off 2016 we rearranged everything in the compound. I woke up one morning and tore the house apart. The 40 empty binders that were taking up space in the garage? Donated. The 20 wire file holders that were stacked on top of each other? Recycled. A first-aid kit with neosporin that expired in *1991*? Thrown the fuck out. Brace walked in in the middle of my cleaning frenzy and asked, "Are you on meth?" It was a reasonable question.

It's amazing what rearranging a space can do for the psychic energy of a place. It's also amazing what the addition of new blood can do. I'm psyched to have a co-conspirator again, in the form of Brendan, the new content co-coordinator. A native of Des Moines, the other day he told us, "The Midwest is everything that touches Iowa." His Midwestern rationality is (so far) the perfect complement to my East Coast explosiveness and Eli's West Coast calm. We've got a lot in the works for the mag coming up, so write to him and say what's up.

Getting on a plane tomorrow to hang with friends in Olympia and see G.L.O.S.S. and Priests gig into the night...Up there again on tour in March. Homies from all over rolling in for the fest in a few weeks. We just got a mini-fridge for Shitworker Beer at the compound. Barcelona 12" is on as I write this. New band practice next week. Punk life looks good from where I'm sitting. Thanks for that.

Finally, R.I.P. to our friend Filip Fuchs. More reflections on this generous and important punk in the next issue. Have something to share about Filip's life? Write to me.

*grace@maximumrocknroll.com*

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## TRUST

We like to meet people/bands/art/sport/etc. that do what they do out of passion in the first place. People who believe in a underground culture and are aware that most of the stuff that is sold nowadays under that flag is total crap only made to make money. And, if you feel you can write and relate, get in touch. To put it with Fugazi's words:

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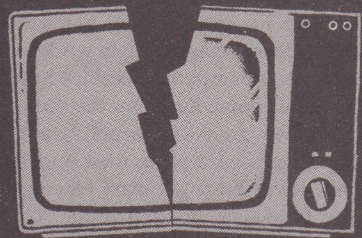

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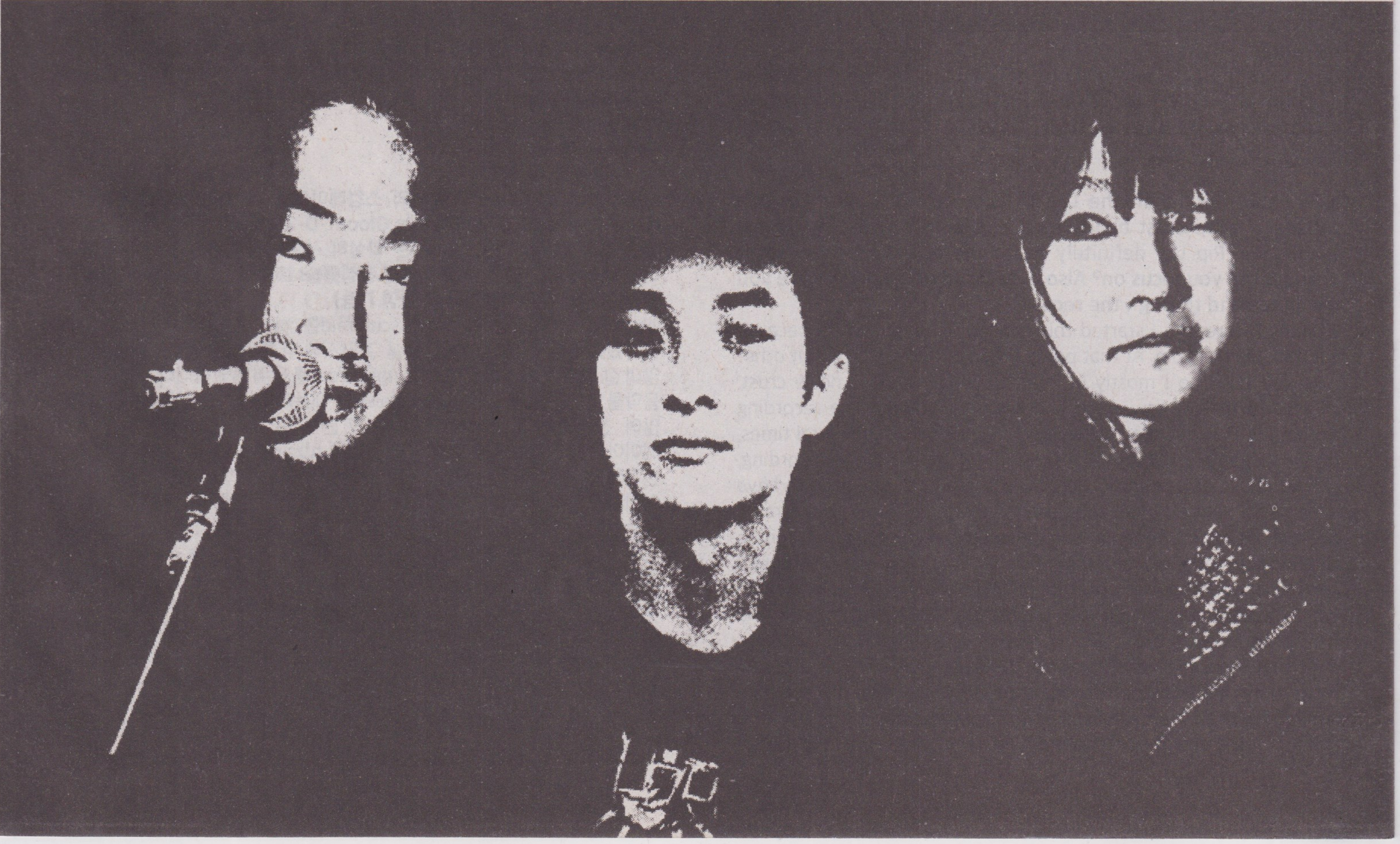
# SCUMRAID

....TIME TO RESIST CRISIS ....

*Korea is known for its high suicide rate, creating workaholics and suck-up leeches, men beating up their girlfriends, plastic surgery, and the internet. Therefore, punk here is supposed to be badass. I mean punk, DIY punk as punk. Scumraid is one of the bands at the forefront of the new scene, which started in the early 2010s, spurting Distress-Effervescence-Awakening-Delinquency.*

*Introduction and questions by Kang Yong-jun (Banran, S.A.G.A.L.), translated by Im Yeji, and edited by Tits Belair. Photos by Ken Robinson and Swan Park.*



**MRR: Please introduce yourselves. What is the meaning of the band name? What style of music do you play?**

Jihwan: [I play] guitar and do vocals. The name has no particular meaning. I like it because the words seem aggressive. We play noise hardcore.

Dongwoo: [I play] bass and do vocals. I think the name is kind of embarrassing. It was chosen before I joined the band. I'm glad I didn't have anything to do with it.

Juyoung: [I play] drums.

**MRR: Your sound on the** Out of Order **EP is similar to '90s Japanese noise crust bands such as Gloom and D-Clone. Your second EP,** Rip Up, **definitely has a more unique style. What changes did you focus on? Also, what kind of message were you trying to send through the record?**

Jihwan: The reason I started this band with Juyoung was because we both liked Gloom. At that point, I didn't know much about other hardcore punk so I mostly listened to Japanese '90s noise crust. I focus on making raw noise and really care about the recording sound. For Out of Order, we layered the guitar tracks several times, trying to get a good mix of fuzz and distortion. While recording, we didn't use other bands' records as a reference. We tried to have each instrument be huge with excessive effects to create the most destructive sound possible. For the second EP, Rip Up, we took a simpler approach influenced by '80s UK hardcore. We felt there'd be a fuller sound if we kept it basic. We were very prepared when we recorded and just went with the feeling. We finished quickly and were satisfied with the result.

At that time, the sickening state of Korean society was stressing me out and it influenced the idea for the record cover. People here are hiding their true selves. Their beliefs, opinions, choices, and state of mind are all controlled by TV, radio, internet. In Rip Up, I

**MRR: 안녕하세요, 자기 소개를 부탁합니다. 이름 뜻? 어떤 음악하나요?**

Jihwan: 기타/보컬의 류지환 입니다. 밴드 이름에 딱히 큰 의미는 없습니다만 공격적인 성향( tendency)을 잘 나타내는 단어들이라 맘에 들었고 Scumraid를 밴드 이름으로 정했습니다. 우리는 noise hardcore를 하고 있습니다.

Dongwoo: 베이스/보컬의 이동우.Scumraid.. 뜻은 좀 부끄러운 거 같은데, 밴드 이름을 지을 땐 내가 들어오기 전이라 이름 짓는 데 일조하지 않아서 다행이라 생각합니다.

Juyoung: 드럼의 이주영 입니다.

**MRR: Out of Order 7"에서의 스컴레이드의 사운드는 90년대 일본의 Noise Crust라고 잘 알려져 있는 Gloom, D- clone 의 사운드와 많이 닮아 있습니다. 2번째 7"인 Rip up은 확실히 사운드가 개성이 있어 보입니다. 어떤 변화에 주안점 을 두고 작업을 진행했습니까? 또한 어떤 이야기를 하고 싶었습니까? (1,2 세븐인치 다 설명 가능)**

Jihwan: 드러머인 juyoung과 scumraid를 하게 된것도 서로 gloom을 좋아했었기 때문이였고, 저는 사실 그 당시에 다 른 hardcore punk band를 많이 잘 알지 못했기 때문에 90's noise core를 많이 들었습니다. 그러다보니 음악을 여러 번 들으면서 raw noise를 내는데 항상 노력했고 녹음 에도 많이 신경썼습니다. out of order 7"는 기타 리프를 여러번 녹음해서 레이아웃을 겹치는 식으로 작업을 했는데 fuzz,distortion이 잘 어울리게끔 신경썼습니다. 녹음 당시엔 다른 밴드들의 녹음방법을 많이 참고한것은 아니지만, 악기파트가 모두 지나친 이펙트와 연주를 이용해서 그 당시 낼수있는 소리중 가장 파괴적인 소리로 녹음을 할수있게끔 시도했습니다. 2번째 7"인 rip-up은 좀 더 순수하게 작업을 했습니 다. 80's uk hardcore에 영향을 많이 받았고 그 동시에 noisecore를 시도했습니다. 복잡한것보다는 단순한것이 더 강할것이라는 생각을 했고 멤버 모두 단련이 되어있어서 그때 그 기운 그대로 녹음실에 갔습니다. 녹음은 빠르게 끝마쳤고 결과도 만족스러웠습니다. 그렇게 사운드에도 신경을 썼지만 그 당시에 저는 한국사회의 병폐에 굉장히 스트레스를 받고있었고 그 때 떠오른 아이디어를 ep 의 테마에 싣고자 하고 design했습니다. 자기의 본모습을 감추고 TV, 인터넷,라디오,유행사회가 시키는 대로 주관,신념,취향,선택,자아를 바꾸고 스스로를 찾지못하는채로 살아가는 사람들의 병적인 사회를 RIP-UP에서

wanted to talk about our nauseating society and people who go through their lives without knowing who they really are.
Dongwoo: Clearly we rip off their sound. I think at that time we listened to a lot of stuff so we were influenced by many other bands and that's why it turned out like that. It was nothing special. I like Out of Order more, but Iron Lung's mastering of Rip Up was really awesome.
Juyoung: I started a band because I wanted to sound exactly like Gloom. I wanted to use a lot of toms, rushing kick, and crash set similar to Gloom's drum patterns, like a tribal sound. The second EP was simpler and more fun. I'm working on Gloom-influenced drumming again for new upcoming songs.

**MRR: D-takt & Råpunk released** Out of Order **and Iron Lung Records released** Rip Up. **How did that come to be?**
Jihwan: I've never been to Sweden, but luckily we got in touch with D&R through the internet. We met Jensen from Iron Lung Records when we played a couple shows together in Korea. Actually, there are a few well-known hardcore bands in Korea, so hopefully more connections will be made with other countries for releases. People who are running labels make things like this possible and I truly appreciate the international hardcore punk network.

**MRR: The Korean scene is slowly becoming known to the world. What's the Korean scene like? How big? What makes it special?**
Jihwan: Korea had a punk scene before. Korean society is very repressed emotionally and physically. I heard that the beginning of the scene started with small venues in the early '90s having people come and play loud music. Now, 20 years later, many people left because of their jobs, family, or just reality. Some people are still around and playing like the past doesn't matter. It's a very small scene now. There are problems like posers coming and making trouble. Small problems become big problems, but we try to stick together and help each other.

얘기했습니다.
Dongwoo: 확실히 Out of Order는 그쪽 밴드 사운드를 베꼈고 ripup 땐 다른 걸 많이 듣다 보니 여기저기 휘둘려서 그런 사운드가 된 거 같기도 한데 별거없습니다. 전 outoforder를 더 좋아하지만, 확실히ironlung의 ripup 마스터링은 정말 좋았습니다.
Juyoung: 초기에는 무작정 Gloom같은 사운드를 내고싶어서 밴드를 시작했습니다.
탐을 특히 자주이용하는 Gloom의 드럼패턴에 (원시부족의 축제소리 같은) 다급한 킥+크래쉬 세트를 첫번째 EP에서 구현하려고 노력했었고 두번째 EP인 Rip Up은 신나고 좀더 간단하게 구성했습니다. 새로나오는 곡들은 다시 Gloom의 드럼을 연구해서 만 드려고 합니다.

**MRR: Out of Order 는-D-takt & Råpunk에서, Rip Up은Iron Lung Records에서 발매했습니다. 어떤 계기로 발매하게 되었나요?**
Jihwan: 스웨덴에 가본적은 없지만 웹에서 연락이 닿아 운좋게 jocke ep를 발매할수있었습니다. Iron Lung RecordsS의 Jensen은 Iron Lung과 함께 한국 투어를 한적이 있어서 알게됐습니다. 그 이후로도 계속 연락을 했고 결국 새로운 EP를 발매할수있게 됐습니다. 사실 한국에도 꽤 알려진 HARDCORE PUNK BAND가 몇 있지만 지속적인 EP발매를 통해서 해외교류가 더 생겼으면 하는 바램이 컸고 다행히도 외국의 레이블 관계자들에게 도움을 받을수있어서 성공적으로 발매를 할수있었습니다. international hardcore punk network에 고마움을 느낀다.

**MRR: 한국 씬은 서서히 세계에 알려지고 있습니다.알려진 바가 적은 한국의 씬의 규모와 특징은 어떤게 있을까요?**
Jihwan: 한국에도 펑크는 오래전부터 있었습니다. 한국사회는 감정적으로나 육체적으로도 폐쇄돼있는 편인데 90년대 초반쯤에 작은 클럽이 생기고 할것없는 젊은이들이 옹기종기 모여서 시끄러운 음악을 만들고 한것이 scene의 시작이라고 들었습니다. 20년이 지난 지금의 scene은 많은 사람들이 결혼,직장,현실 때문에 떠나버렸고 남아있는 소수의 사람들이 옛날일은 상관없다는듯이 활동하고 있습니다. 규모가 작은만큼 poser들이 씬에 들어와 문제를 일으키려고 하는일도 있고 작은 사건들도 크게 심화되기도 하지만 서로 의기투합이 잘 돼서 힘든일도 같이 나눠서 진행하는 일도 많습니다.

Dongwoo: There's nothing special. That's what makes it special. Jealousy, being mad about fucking small things, talking shit behind each other's backs. The most precious thing is to follow the trend. Punks or whoever are just trying to be early adopters. They have their opinions, but it's all cheap and shallow. To be honest, I'm in a punk band because I hate typical Korean people who don't know their place and seek attention, but there's always one in every Korean punk band. In Korea, if you want to start a punk band, just ask your mom to buy you a biker jacket and drink a lot. That's it. You don't even need to listen to the music.

Juyoung: In 2006, I went to a show for the first time. I was fifteen. Everyone just had fun together no matter what kind of punk you were. But in 2009, when the only punk venue Skunk Hell shut down, the scene kind of grew apart. Around 2012, a right-wing internet community "Ilbe" appeared and we started to keep a distance from bands that were involved. Naturally we developed this DIY hardcore punk scene. I think there aren't many "punk" bands left, but I prefer the current scene. No unnecessary seniority, sexism, or fascism. I think this is the beginning.

Dongwoo: 별거 없는 게 특징이라면 특징인데... 또는 서로 시기하고 질투나 하고, 좇도 아닌 거에 삐져서 뒷담들이나 까고 다닙니다. 그리고 무엇보다 소중한 건 유행을 따르는 것이라 스스로를 펑크든 뭐든 얼리 어댑터로 허둥지둥 포장하기에나 급급하 며,주관이 없진 않지만 있어 봤자 천박한 싸구려 주관들로 넘치는 게 특징입니다.솔직히 말하면 한국 특유의 주제 파악 못 하고 주목받고 싶은 마음에 민폐나 끼치고 다니는 새끼들이 싫어서 펑크 밴드를 하고 펑크 친구들을 만나는 건데, 사실 모든 한 국 펑크 밴드엔 그런 사람들이 하나씩은 꼭 있습니다. 한국에서 펑크라는 것을 하려면 엄마 졸라서 가죽 라이더 자켓 하나 사고 술만 많이 마시면 되니까요. 음악도 안 들어도 됩니다.

JuYoung: 제가 처음 공연장에 갔던 만 15살 (2006년)에는 장르와 정치성향에 크게 관계없이 다함께 즐기는 분위기였는데, 가장 중심적이였던 펑크 공연장 Skunk hell이 2009년쯤에 사라지고부터 서로 만날 기회가 없어지면서 조금씩 씬이 나눠지기 시작했습니다. 그리고 2012년쯤부터 넷우익 사이트 '일베'라는 커뮤니티가 생기고 그곳에서 활동하는 밴드들과 자연스럽게 멀어지면서 지금의 DIY Hardcore punk 씬이 생겼습니다. 현재도 한국에서 펑크밴드라고 꼽을 수 있는 수는 적다고 생각합니다. 하지만 확실히 씬이 나눠지면서 불필요한 선배문화, 성차별, 파시즘 등등에서 스트레스받을 일이 없어졌기 때문에 지금이 더 좋습니다. 이제 시작이라고 생각해요.

**MRR: I'm not sure if this is well-known or not, but Korea is famous for its high suicide rate and long working hours. The two years of mandatory prison-like military service is also a problem. Did these kind of social issues affect Scumraid? How do you feel about living in Korea?**

Jihwan: When I was a minor, I had no idea what I wanted to do. I grew up in the countryside. My friends were only talking about boring stuff. They also didn't know what to do. They all seemed to have accepted society's rules. Graduate high school, go to the military, get a job, get married, have a child, prepare for retirement. It's the same in the city too, not only the countryside. I really didn't want to live like that. In this monotonous society, there is always this unspoken pressure that wears me out. To bear this I needed to find something

**MRR: 알려져 있는지 모르겠지만, 한국은 전세계에서 가장 자살을 많이 하고, 가장 오래 노동을 하면서 살고 있는 곳으로 알려 져 있습니다. 동시에 2년정도의 감옥 같은 생활을 하는 입대문제도 있고, 이런 사회적 사안이 스컴레이드가 펑크밴드로 형성되는 데 영향을 끼쳤을지요? 또 한국에서 사는 것은 본인들에게 어떻습니까?**

Jihwan: 청소년 시절에 저는 미래에 뭘 해야할지 도저히 몰랐습니다. 당시엔 지방 도시에서 살고있었는데, 친구들도 전부 시시한 얘기만 하고있었고 역시 미래에 뭘 할지 모르는것도 마찬가지 였습니다. 고등학교 졸업을 하면 군대에 가는것도 당연하게 생각하거니와 군 제대 후 취직,그리고 결혼 후 자식을 기르고 노후를 준비하는 그런 전형적 레파토리의 삶을 그대로 순응하고 있었습니다. 그리고 지방 도시 뿐만아니라 , 한국사회의 많은 사람들이 특별한 자신의 생각이나 계획같은것도 없이 그저 사회가 제시하는대로 삶을 살고있습니다. 저는 정말로 그렇게 살기 싫었고 지금은

inspiring or fun, so I decided to spend my time playing in a band.
Dongwoo: The core of Korean society is a pile of filth. Everyone lives this certain kind of life without question. If you can't stand the abuse, you become a loser. Unless you have a very unique circumstance or meet someone special, you will never escape from this narrow-minded socialization. If you avoid military service, you will have a hard time for the rest of your life. Two years of brainwashing from the military in your early twenties makes you live that way. In the Korean military, you rise in rank automatically. For many people, that will be the greatest moment of their life. Obey those stronger than you, dominate the weak. In that position, it's okay to beat someone up without shame. It's like a drug to them. That's why half the conversations of Korean males in their mid-twenties are about memories from the military. If you didn't do military service, you can't even talk with them. Funny thing is that it's the same for Korean punks. They don't even realize that it's incompatible and dangerous. There are many punks living like that. I mentioned it earlier, if you want to be a punk in Korea, all you need to do is ask your mom for a leather jacket and drink a lot. It's hard to go abroad or move to another country if you didn't finish military service. Well, it's possible if you have two billion dollars. And if you refuse to go, you go to prison for two years. I just hate it in so many ways.
Juyoung: I'm a graphic designer. For the last year and a half, I worked for a typical, shitty Korean company. Go to work by 10:00 AM, leave around 2:00 or 3:00 AM almost every day. I often worked for 24 hours straight through the night. Of course there was no incentive. I got a fixed pay of $1700/month. Thankfully I live with my parents. I had no problems with finances, but it took a toll on my health and I was stressed out. Working like a slave since the moment you're hired is common. To continue a career as a designer, I had to bear this, but eventually I gave up. I had more important thing to do than that. Now I work as a freelance designer and photographer. I work less and am under no stress.

다행히도 가장 재밌는것을 찾게됐지만 안타깝게도 다양성이 없는 현실의 사회에서는 무언 의 압박 같은것이 항상 있어서 힘이들었습니다. 그런것을 견디기 위해서는 생각을 자극하는 동기같은거나 재미가 필요했고 지금까지도 계속 밴드를 하면서 시간을 보내고 있습니다.
Dongwoo: 현재한국사회의기초는그더러운것들이쌓여서만들어졌습니다. 덕분에 모든 인간이 그런 삶을 당연시하는 사회 분위기입니다. 그 폭력적인 더러움을 견디지 못하는 사람이 생기면 오히려 낙오자로 몰아갑니다. 아주 아주 특별한 경험이나 만 남이 없인 그 고립된 생각과 흐름에서 절대 벗어날 수 없지요. 군대에 가지 않으면 평생의 사회생활이 정말 힘들어집니다. 20 대 초반 몸과 머리에 주입된 2년의 군사주의적 경험이 평생을 그렇게 살도록 만듭니다. 군대 안에서는 시간이 지나면 자동으로 높은 지위를 획득 가능한데, 그때의 경험이 평생 맛볼 수 있는 경험 중 가장 달콤한 자리일 사람들이 많습니다. 강자에게는 굽히지만, 약자에겐 그 무엇보다 떳떳이 폭력적으로 강해질 수 있는 자리는 그들에겐 마약이나 다름없습니다. 덕분에 한국 남자는 20대 중반 이후 평생 그때의 추억을 자랑하는 것이 대화의 절반 이상을 차지합니다. 그러니 군대를 다녀오지 않은 자는 대화조 차 낄 수도 없을 때가 다반사입니다. 재미있는 부분은 한국의 펑크들에게도 너무 당연하게 주입되는 일들이라 이런 것들에 대해 위화감이나 경각심이 전혀 없는 건 물론이고 저렇게 살아가는 펑크들이 꽤 있습니다. 위에 잠깐 말했지만, 한국에서 펑크 하려면 엄마 졸라서 가죽 라이더 자켓 하나 사고 술만 많이 마시면 되니까요.아무튼,군대에 가기 전엔 출국도 힘들고 이민도 불가능 하지만 돈이 20억 정도 있다면 가능합니다. 그리고 군대를 거부하면 2년간 감옥에서 살아야 하는데, 아무튼 여러모로 싫네요.
Juyoung: 저는 그래픽 디자이너이고 지난 1년 반 동안 한국의 전형적인 악질 회사에 다녔습니다. 아침 10시에 출근해서 새벽 2-3시에 퇴근하는건 일상이였고 24시간을 꼬박 일하고 아침퇴근도 잦았습니다. 물론 인센티브는 없 었어요. 그렇게 일하고 한달에 170만원 고정월급이였습니다. 다행히 부모님집에 살고있어서 금전적인 부담은 없었지만 점점 건강 이 악화되고 회사에서 받는 상하관계에 대한 스트레스도 만만치않았습니다. 고용되었으니 노예처럼 일하는건 한국에서 당연한 일 입니다. 한국에서 디자인일을 계속하려면 이 환경을 버텨내야만 하는데, 저는 결국 포기했어요. 현실과 타협하기에는 더 소중한 것이 많았으니까요. 지금은 혼자 프리랜서 디자이너겸 사진가로 일하면서 적게 일하고 스트레스없이 지내고있습니다.

**MRR: Scumraid's lyric are very poetic, but it seems like you guys want to continue talking about reality. What do you want to talk about?**

Jihwan: Korean society doesn't teach you what you want to know. It will be the same everywhere, but here especially it is much worse. Society here tries harder to contain you. Most people thinks that K-pop is everything. There is only one option for taste and opinion. Accepting their given life. So when you see irregular behavior, or even if it happens to you, you ignore it and say nothing, just masturbate and move on. I want to put these stories in the lyrics. Honestly, I don't care if you read the lyrics or not. People who come to shows care more about seeing it live. At the show, I'm sure you can tell what we're trying to say.

Dongwoo: I don't know if it's poetic or not. When I write lyrics, I just get embarrassed so I change them when I play. Sometimes we don't even play certain songs. Maybe the angry thoughts disappear. Or I deny what I felt at that time. Maybe because I am ashamed of my past self.

**MRR: Korea tries to accept as many immigrants as possible, but in reality, Korea is very uninviting to outsiders. It's very hypocritical and interesting. Is there anything like this within the scene?**

Dongwoo: I'm not sure if it's because everyone in the scene wants to be righteous or do something that everyone else says is right, but it looks beautiful on the surface. But there is always some kind of discrimination. The people who do discriminate are ignorant and not willing to try to understand. Normal Koreans outside of punk are causing an overflow of hatred and childish, emotional arguments.

**MRR: Juyoung, you get a lot of attention for being a female drummer. Is there anything uncomfortable about being a girl in the Korean punk scene?**

**MRR: 스컴레이드의 가사는 매우 시적으로 표현이 되어 있지만 현실에 대해서 지속적으로 이야기 하고 싶어하는 것 같습니다. 어떤 이야기를 하고 있습니까? (누가 가사를 쓰는지 밝혀도됨)**

Jihwan: 스스로가 하고싶은것을 한국사회는 알려주지 않아요. 그건 세계 어딜가나 마찬가지겠지만 여기는 특별히 더 심한것같 습니다. 알려주지 않는다고 하기보단, 오히려 사회가 방해를 합니다. 이곳에서는 음악이라면 K-POP이 주류고 정말 일반 대부분 의 사람이 그런 음악이 전부라고 생각합니다. 그런것처럼, 사람들의 취향이라던지 주관 같은것이 한 방향으로만 되어있고 주어진 삶을 그대로 순응하게 만들어버립니다. 그렇다보니 부조리를 발견하거나 , 직접 당하게 되어도 참거나 그냥 무시하고 자위나 일삼는 삶을 살게되는것이죠. 이런 사는 이야기를 가사에 닮으려고 노력합니다. 솔 직히 가사를 읽든 말든 상관없지만 공연장에 놀러오는 사람들은 가사를 듣기보다는 live자체를 보는편이고. live에선 굳이 가 사를 듣지않아도 무엇을 이야기 하는지 느낄거라고 생각합니다.

Dongwoo: 시적으로 쓰는 건 모르겠고 가사를 열심히 쓴 뒤 나중엔 왠지 부끄러워서 가사를 바꿔 부르던가 또는 공연에서 하 지 않는 곡들이 종종 생깁니다. 가사를 쓰던 당시의 생각이 나 고민 또는 분노가 지금은 좆도 아닌 걸 수도 있네요. 또는 그때 의 자신을 부정하는 걸지도 모릅니다. 쪽팔리는 내 과거는 내가 아니고 싶으니까 가 이유일까요?

**MRR: 동아시아에서도 가장 이민자를 많이 받아들이려 하지만, 실제로 한국은 타국의 이민자들에 대해 굉장히 배타적인 태도를 고수하는게 매우 이중적이면서도 흥미롭습니다. 한국씬에서 이것에 대한 태도가 매우 궁금하네요. 혹시 배타적인 씬의 모습이 있 는지요?**

Dongwoo: 씬 안에선 다들 정의로워지고 싶으니까 정의롭고 싶으니까, 옳다고 여겨지는 걸 하고 싶으니까 그런 걸까 모르겠지 만, 겉보기엔 적당히 아름다워 보입니다. 하지만 어떠한 차별들은 언제나 존재하는데 그 차별의 주체는 그걸 알지도, 알려고 하 지도 않습니다. 씬 밖으로 나가서 한국의 일반적인 인간들의 모습을 보자면, 역겨울 정도의 차별과 혐오 그리고 유치한 아동적 감정싸움들이 너무 자연스럽게 넘칩니다.

**MRR: 드러머 주영씨는 여성 드러머로서 주목을 받는 것 같군요. 여성펑크로서 감수하는 불편함등이 한국 펑크씬에 존재합니까?**

Juyoung: I don't think it's exclusive to Korea. It will be the same in other countries. It makes me really uncomfortable that my drumming is judged differently because I'm a girl. Some people think because I'm small, I will not be able to play with a lot of power. Your size and sex are irrelevant when it comes to playing an instrument. I think anyone with arms or legs can do it.

**MRR: It's impressive that you continue to bring bands like System Fucker and Reality Crisis from Japan for The More I See. I think this will have a big impact on the Korean punk scene.**
Juyoung: At first, I took pictures and used the name Themoreisee. I began taking pictures of bands outside of Korea and wanted to bring them here. I used the same name when I organized the show. Since Japan is near and I go often, I know a lot of bands I want to invite. We did an outdoor show in the park and many people came to see the bands and became interested. The scene here is very small so sometimes you lose passion and no one is working hard to make things happen. The bands I invite to Korea have been playing for a long time and are very invested in their scene and there are a lot of things that we can learn from them. I want it to be a wake-up call. That's why I do it.

**MRR: What bands are you into right now?**
Jihwan: Lifelock, Daily Ritual, Chain Rank, Vaaska, Dead Chunks, DiE, Impalers, Warthog, Generacion Suicida, the Jazz Intrusion
Dongwoo: I think everybody will be into the same bands. If I said anything, there will just be a youtube link, so I'll just mention Korean bands you'd normally never know. Find the Spot and Gonguri just finished their Japan tour successfully. They're not playing anymore, but I still love Banran.
Juyoung: The young band Dead Chunks from Korea.

**MRR: Anything else you want to add?**
Jihwan: Next year, we're going on a tour outside of Korea. I hope to meet you all at the shows. Thanks to No Fucker.
Dongwoo : (= ω )ノ
Juyoung: I recently released my photo book, "The More I See, '11-'15," of live punk shows from Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia. Please buy them all.

scumraid.bandcamp.com

Juyoung: 한국 뿐만 아니라 어디서든 마찬가지이지만 여자라는 이유로 드럼에 관한 평가를 받는 것은 정말 불편합니다. 몸집 이 작아서 드럼치는 힘도 약할거라고 생각하는 사람도 간혹 있는데, 악기연주는 체급이나 성에 따라 기준이 바뀌는 운동이 아니 니까요. 연주하는건 팔다리 달린 사람이라면 다 똑같다고 생각해요.

**MRR: 드러머 주영이 하는 연속공연인 The More I See 는 System Fucker, Reality Crisis등 일본의 밴드들과 지 속적인 공연을 진행하고 있는 것이 인상적입니다. 한국씬에 큰 영향을 끼쳤을거라 생각하는데 ... (더 모아 아이씨에 대해서 이야 기해주면됨)**
Juyoung: 처음엔 제가 사진찍을때 사용하고있는 이름 Themoreisee로 해외에 가서 촬영했던 멋있는 밴드를 한국에 불러보 자! 해서 같은 타이틀로 공연 기획을 하게 되었는데요, 특히 가까운 일본에 라이브를 보러 자주 가다보니까 초대할 밴드가 많아 졌습니다. 공원에서 야외공연을 하다보니 아무나와서 라이브를 보고 밴드 이름을 묻기도하고, 관심을 보이는 사람들이 많이 생기 는것 같습니다.
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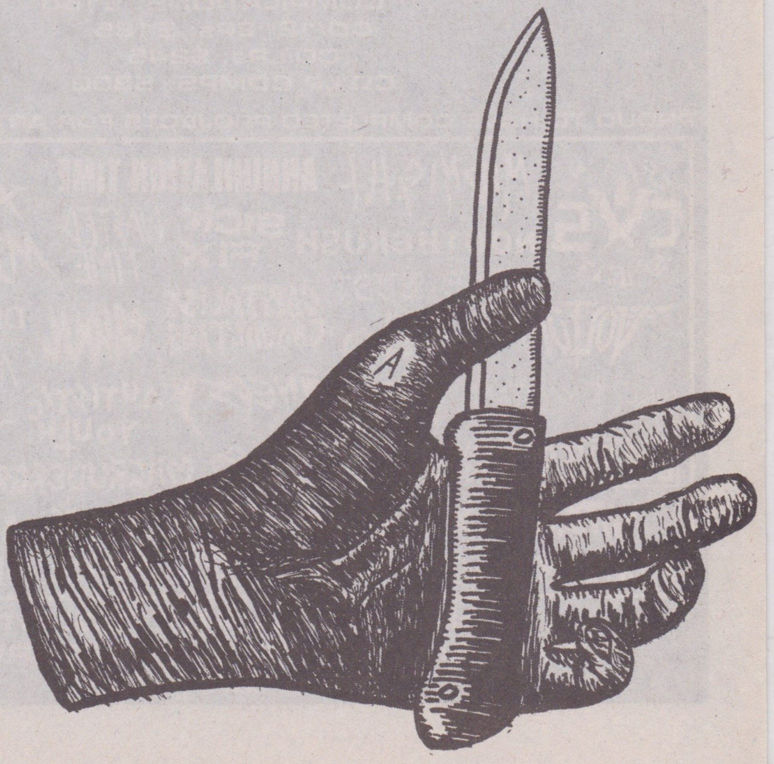

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*I met Hannah Lew—primary songwriter, singer, and bass player in Bay Area post-punk/pop heroes Cold Beat—over a decade ago, when she was cutting her teeth in a band called Shitstorm who played to little acclaim across the dive bars and punk house backyards of the Mission. Shitstorm included a collection of humans who would eventually morph into, among other bands, Lew's next group, Grass Widow. Even in those shambolic early Shitstorm days, in an entirely different Bay Area punk scene, Hannah's moody and inimitable songwriting stood out, though it would have been hard to guess that she would eventually form a band as perfect and otherworldly as Cold Beat. These days, Cold Beat has provided the soundtrack to my every mood, with songs that are at once gloomy, introspective, tense, and even occasionally hopeful. Their newest album* Into the Air, *on Lew's Crime on the Moon label, is the record of 2015, providing a meaningful antidote to ever-threatening scourges of crass commercialism and creeping nostalgia. In what follows below, Lew and I talk about the ethics of music making, getting older, and what it means to make art for the freaks.*

***Interview and introduction by Golnar Nikpour. Photos provided by the band.***

# COLD BEAT

**I know that when Cold Beat began, it was largely your vision, whereas your previous band Grass Widow was more collaborative. Is this still the case? There have been some lineup changes with Cold Beat, and I'm curious if that has affected the songwriting process.**

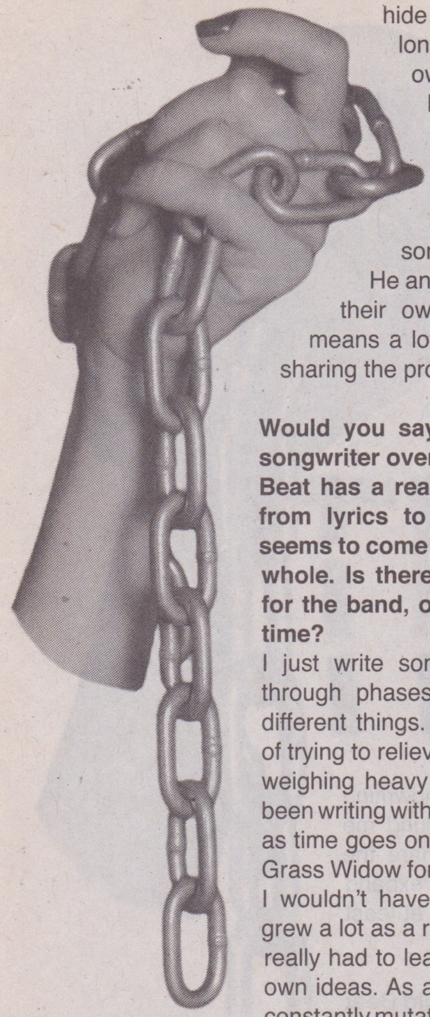
Typically, I demo a song, which tends to include a basic drum machine track, bass guitar track, vocals, and sometimes synth or guitar lines, depending on the tune. Then, I send what I have to Jackson and Kyle. We smooth out arrangements together, and they add things in the studio. Sometimes they write additional lines, and sometimes they just play what I write. I write all the lyrics. I always send them my lyrics as I'm writing so they can know what kind of freaky shit I am thinking about.

On *Into The Air*, I opened up the floor a bit more for people to bring their ideas to the group, so it became sort of the band version of Cold Beat. I've had lots of friends play in the project; Kyle King has been the only constant. Jackson Blumgart has been in the band for a long time, so at this point the three of us are Cold Beat. For the making of *Into The Air*, Susie Leni was our steady drummer and contributed ideas to the album. Really, everyone was part of this album.

Although the project is primarily my songwriting outlet, it's nice to have people I trust around me so I can let down my guard a bit and share the songwriting process. I tend to contract and expand amidst that. I work alone most of the time, at least in the initial stages.

**Was there a conscious desire to have Cold Beat be more collaborative? Is it lonely being so primary in the process, as opposed to being in a band that writes everything together from the first steps?**

There are definitely pros and cons to writing collaboratively. With Cold Beat, I've had to challenge myself to wear my ideas and my voice and to just own that. I've really honed my intuition about what sounds right to me. With *Into the Air*, the three of us bounced ideas off of each other, so it was easier to



hide sometimes. It can be lonely tripping out on my own about concepts and lyrics, but my dudes are so supportive. It helps to have people that are into what I'm creating. Jackson contributed a song to the LP, "7 Sisters." He and Kyle have been bringing their own ideas to the table. It means a lot to me that they are into sharing the process.

**Would you say you've changed as a songwriter over the years? To me, Cold Beat has a really strong overall feel—from lyrics to music to art—that all seems to come together into a coherent whole. Is there some vision you have for the band, or does it change all the time?**

I just write songs all the time and go through phases of being influenced by different things. Songwriting is a process of trying to relieve pressure from emotions weighing heavy on my chest. I think I've been writing with less and less compromise as time goes on. Writing collaboratively in Grass Widow forced me to consider things I wouldn't have otherwise, and I think I grew a lot as a result. With Cold Beat, I've really had to learn to trust myself and my own ideas. As a result, my songwriting is constantly mutating. Each song is different. Sometimes the lyrics spill out with the riffs, sometimes I labor over them forever.

**Some themes or images seem to reappear in lyrics for different songs...**

We called the LP *Into The Air* because we realized there were themes of air, clouds, and atmosphere running throughout the lyrics.

**Tell me about the song "Outrunning Shadows." This song really resonates with me, because it seems to me that we have to outrun all kinds of nostalgia as we grow older. There's personal stuff, but also, playing in punk/post-punk/whatever bands, we're always making music in the shadow of giants from yesteryear. I have thought more, as I've gotten older, that I don't want to always be making music that immediately reminds people of long gone scenes. But at the same time, what I do is beholden to those sounds. Is this something you think about?**

Oh yeah, big time! It's so easy as an aging punk to feel like your heyday has come and gone. Especially these days in San Francisco, it's easy to get nostalgic for a different time in music. I'm very dedicated to creating new experiences that feel real for where I'm at now. I am not interested in resting on my laurels or capitalizing on my legacy in any way. I want to make relevant work that challenges me and my peers right now.

The song "Outrunning Shadows" is about a particularly bad bout of depression I was going through. I went on a trip to New York by myself for a couple of weeks to try to shake my shadow. It was sort of a "wherever you go, there you are" kind of situation…but I tried!

CRIME ON THE MOON

**Let's talk about your label, Crime on the Moon. Why do a label? Why do the Cold Beat records yourself? What kind of stuff does the label release?**

Sometimes when I'm broke as fuck I ask myself these same questions! [*laughter*]

I initially created Crime On The Moon to release my own stuff and have full control over any business dealings. I have seen it as an opportunity to practice sound capitalism. There are so many people along the way who try to make money off of artists, so it's nice to just do what feels right and make all decisions on my own. I've also been able to use the label as an outlet to put out some things I'm excited about, like Tropic Green.

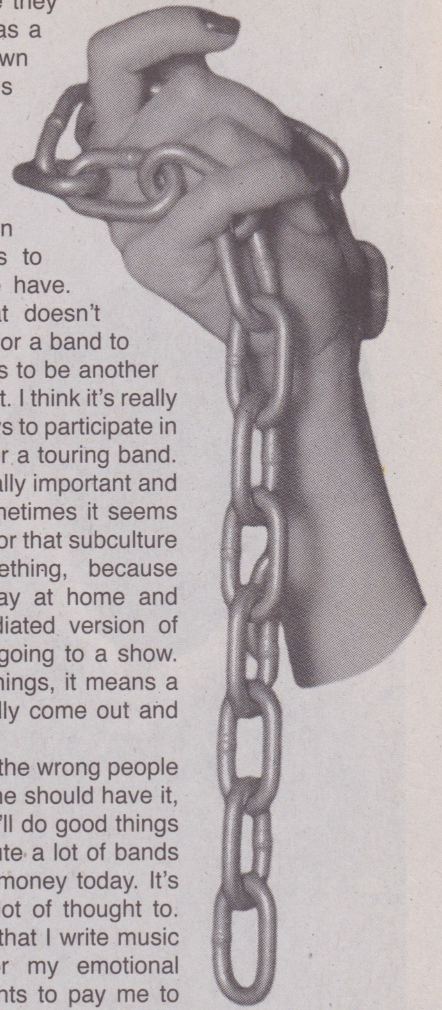
**Is "sound capitalism" an oxymoron? Or is it what punk has talked about since forever, i.e. being DIY and maintaining control?**
I think a lot of punks act like they are beyond capitalism, dumpstering food but disavowing the fact that someone works at the farm and at the store they are dumpstering at. I am more interested in thinking critically about how money is spent instead of pretending I am outside of that system.

**Right. Even as a youngster, I found so much of that stuff strangely anti-political, because it pretended to exist outside of the workings of capital. Fuck that—none of us are actually above the world we really live in. But what about questions of ethics? Are there difficult decisions you've had to make as a band? Are you ever tempted to make compromises that might help financially? From where I'm sitting, Cold Beat seems like a relatively popular band; have you turned things down that didn't feel right even though they could've been lucrative?**
There was a three-month period last year where we played at huge sold out gigs here opening for friends' bands, and the venues paid us less than $125 for each show. I think a lot of bands are able to tour a lot and succeed because they don't pay out openers very well, but no one really wants to talk about money.

**That's even happened to my hardcore band. We've opened a couple of bigger gigs with friends' bands, where like, 1,000 people each paid $15 to get in a Manhattan rock club…and we barely got $50 for cab fare back to Brooklyn!**
It's funny to me that people think we have money. We played a show at The Empty Bottle in Chicago after driving six hours on either end on a recent tour. The venue paid us $125, and I got two emails hitting me up for money. One videographer offered to film our show for "only" $150, and a fancy hotel offered us a discounted room for $225! They saw we were playing at a fancy venue, so they assumed we were rollin' in it.

**It's less that I think you're rollin' in it and more that I wondered if you are able to control things doing your own label, booking your own shows, etc. Are you at a point where you can do band / label stuff full-time?**
I have been broke as fuck all the time since I started the label. I work part time at a couple of places to pay the bills. It's pretty month-to-month in terms of how much I make from music, but it's not a lot.

Without a booking agent, manager, big label, or really anyone advocating for you, it's really hard to make any money. Not everyone values bands touring like they used to. Breaking even as a band putting out your own records and playing gigs is tough these days. That said, I feel very grateful for all the opportunities we've had and for people that have shown support and enabled us to do the bit of touring we have. For every promoter that doesn't appreciate what it takes for a band to tour in 2015, there seems to be another person that actually gets it. I think it's really on people attending shows to participate in the success of a show for a touring band. Everyone attending is really important and not just a spectator. Sometimes it seems like fewer people go out, or that subculture has shrunken or something, because people are happy to stay at home and experience a more mediated version of music online instead of going to a show. From the stage end of things, it means a lot when people physically come out and support.



I'm of the mind that all the wrong people have the money. If anyone should have it, it should be me, 'cause I'll do good things with it. Licensing is a route a lot of bands take as a way to make money today. It's something I've given a lot of thought to. Basically, my thinking is that I write music from my heart and for my emotional survival. If someone wants to pay me to use my song in a different context—like for a movie or TV show—it doesn't change the song for me. It gets tricky for me with advertising, but basically I would consider licensing a Cold Beat song for an ad for a fucked up corporation if it was a lot of money, because I could donate all that money towards saving peoples lives. Like, if someday BP Oil wanted to use our song for an ad and give us $80,000, I could give a small country clean drinking water for life. In a moment like that, I think I'd have to get over myself and what anyone thinks about me if I had the opportunity to save lives. With overpopulation and climate change, our world is so fucked, and if I can help in any way, I want to.

**This in an interview for *MRR*, so I'm curious: is Cold Beat a punk band? Do those kinds of labels matter to you? For instance, I recently saw something online that describes you as a "new wave post-punk surf pop" band.**

I think Cold Beat is a punk band playing electronic music right now.

Punk means different things to different people. I came up with a lot of activist types, but then you have fuck all swazi-toting hipster pricks in the punk scene. I honestly don't relate to the bigger picture of punk these days. Punk was always about acting against society and using tropes of violence to confront the violence that is woven into our society. With the internet and how homogenized things are today, I think it's mostly fashion for a lot of people. Couture violence.

**Still, it seems that unlike some bands with whom you share certain sonic affinities, you're invested in doing things yourselves, on your own terms. This feels like the heart of punk to me.**

I think with any subculture, and certainly in punk, there is the danger of groupthink, which is basically like being a clone of mainstream society. Like, bands will want to play at a venue because it is all-ages, even if that venue is known to tote confederate flags. I urge the youth to think for themselves and challenge their peers. To me, punk music and weirdo freak culture in general is about creating spaces for marginalized people in the audience. So like, people of color, women, LGBTQ folks, etc. Creating environments where that is paramount is important to me.

**I'm interested in how you straddle the worlds you both do and don't belong to. Cold Beat is and isn't a punk band, is and isn't a pop band, etc. Do you care about who you appeal to, or is it something organic that doesn't worry you much?**

I honestly don't know who our audience is. I don't think we have a defined audience. It seems pretty all over the place. But I like that we can play with punk or electronic bands. It's actually pretty cool to not be cool kids in a scene, because I know the people that come out to our shows actually like us—no one is there just to make the scene. As far as I'm concerned, I just make the music and record it, and then it belongs to everyone else.

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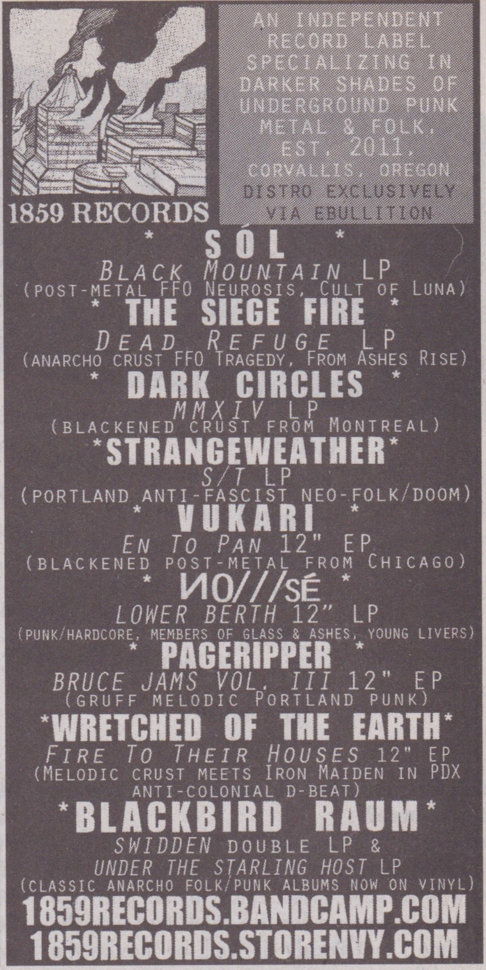

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# CLOCKED OUT

Clocked Out are undisputedly the best straight-up, relentless hardcore band to come out of the city of Glasgow in the past decade. Admittedly, not that many other recent Glaswegian punk bands spring to my mind, but Clocked Out produced enough ragers so far to stand alongside any of the Clevo-hardcore classics that inspired them. They perfectly incorporate memorable riffs into their outright savagery, all of this topped with paint-stripping vocals. Behind the band are some of the most active and committed DIY punks going who also happen to be a lovely bunch of lads. Since forming in 2010, they've been up and down the UK, toured across most of Europe several times, and put out a handful of records, including their most recent: a self-titled LP which was one of the under the radar records of 2015, a totally feral banger.

Introduction, interview, and photos by Jack Pitt.

**MRR: How and when did you start and how did you get here?**

Crawford: We started in January 2010. I was in a bunch of bands that hadn't gone anywhere, so I asked Mick in the pub one night if he was up for it. I think that was the first time I met Paddy as well, or maybe the second time.

Paddy: Aye, I had played in a garagey Stooges band and our first bassist knew Crawford and Mick, so I got in contact via him.

Crawford: But he was a wanker, so we chucked him out. He's still a wanker, but one of those manageable wankers when you're not playing in a band with him.

Mick: After that, Ally played bass with us. We did two European tours and a UK tour together before he decided to leave because he had other shit going on, basically. We had almost a year out in 2013, tried to get focused on writing new songs, and then asked Tony to join and things took off from there again. We just put out the LP in March and did another European tour for three weeks off the back of that. Our most recent gig was in Dublin in July. I moved to Barcelona in August and now here we are.

**MRR: Was there a plan from the outset as far as what you wanted to sound like?**

Crawford: For me, just 9 Shocks Terror, basically. That Cleveland sort of '90s hardcore was my favorite shit. Initially I just wanted to be a band like that, and it evolved from there.

Paddy: Fast, anything fast.

Mick: I don't think it's radically different at a basic level compared to the start, but the more we've played as a band, we found what works, what doesn't work. We've not added that much, but we've got the most out of it.

Crawford: More octaves, but that happened with 9 Shocks.

**MRR: A lot of bands don't make it past a few years, but you have been around for about five now. How has being around for this long affected things?**

Mick: We've had three different bass players. Each one has had their own style of playing, and that changes things. At the start, we had all these threads coming in and going out. It wasn't as tight stylistically as it could be. Now we're tighter, heavier, we've got slower bits and slower songs, and they don't seem out of place.

**MRR: The longer you go, the more you get into your own pattern of doing stuff.**

Mick: Yeah, we don't work as a band just to pay homage to other bands or whatever, or to rip anyone off.

Paddy: We do rip people off, though.

Crawford: Not so much recently, to be fair.

Mick: We're not rigid about where we get our ideas from. It's a big kind of spread of music that influences the music that we play. When I listen back, I hear various different shades of things that maybe other people don't hear, and other people hear things that maybe I don't. I've had people say Dropdead, or Void, or the F.U.'s.

Crawford: I've had Void as well before, and I'm stoked on that because I love them, but I don't really hear it.

Mick: I'm more focused on making it sound good than like anything in particular.

**MRR: Before this most recent LP, you'd only released 7"s. Was there a different thought process involved in this most recent record? I think some bands overthink things because it's a bit trickier than just writing a few songs.**

Mick: We had to think about how the songs flowed.

Crawford: It took a while to write as well.

Paddy: We didn't try and write a higher quality of song or anything for the LP, we just tried to write more songs that flowed into each other. How stuff fits together is what makes something a good album almost more than how many good songs. A good album could be a good album...

Crawford: What are you talking about?

Paddy: There's good albums that are good albums, but then there's good albums that are so easy to listen to because they flow together so nicely that you listen to them on fucking repeat all the time—a truly good album. I'm not saying we did a truly good album, but we tried to make it flow nicely.

**MRR: You can say it's a good album if you like.**

Crawford: I think it is a really good album. I like it.

Paddy: You think so?

Crawford: You can probably tell he's smoked a big joint before this.

Paddy: I'd be smoking it now, but Crawford's got his first day at his job tomorrow and doesn't want his clothes to stink of weed. He's burning sandalwood instead, so he's gonna smell like a fucking hippy.

**MRR: I remember the first time I saw you I said to Crawford that you reminded me of 9 Shocks, and how happy you were about it.**

Crawford: They're my favorite band of all time.

Paddy: Is that the show we played with Sectarian Violence? I had particularly good weed that night. We sat outside the cathedral and got insanely high.

**MRR: Tony Erba and those Cleveland bands have reputations that almost overshadow the music. How much of that was an influence?**

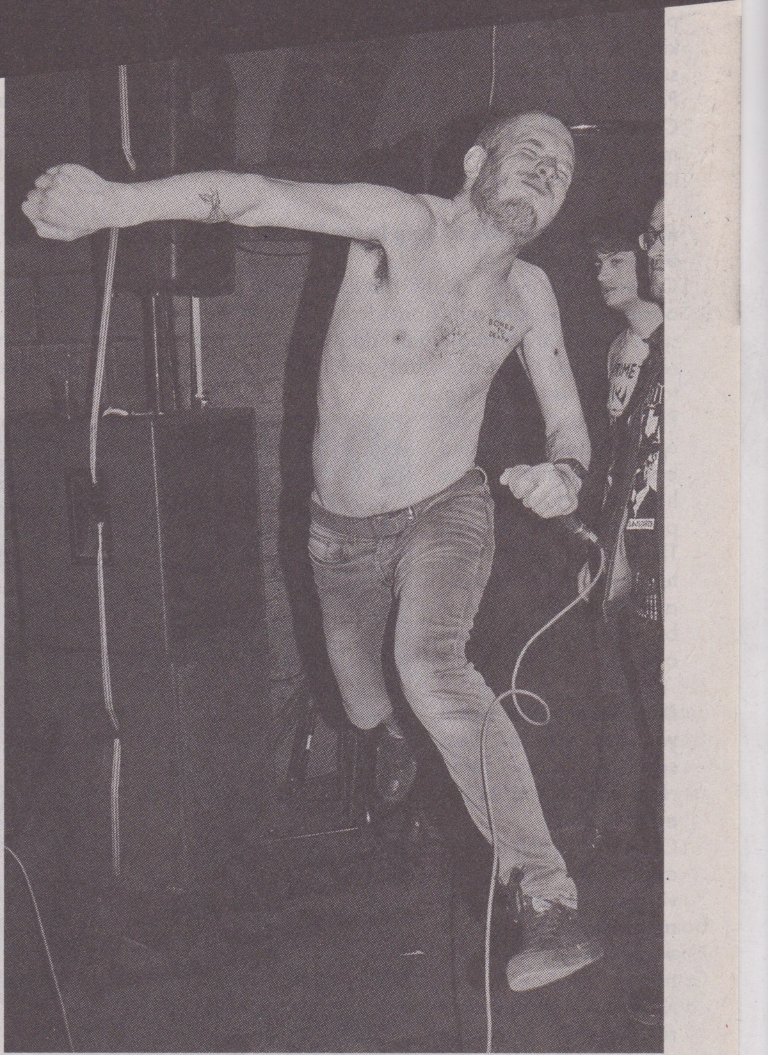
Crawford: Not so much the lyrics because they're generally just nonsense, absolute dog

shit, but Gordon Solie Motherfuckers definitely impacted me. I think I was about eighteen when I started getting into them, and the lyrics are so right on and raging. It affected me when I was younger, definitely, so his other bands more so than 9 Shocks. Not Face Value actually, their lyrics are pretty terrible. His new band is shit as well. They did one good song.
Mick: Performance wise, it was all about having that super distilled thing going on, really getting down to the bones of hardcore. You don't want to see a band play that kind of music and just stand still. I mean, you might not want to get hit with a firecracker...
Crawford: I'm gonna do that at some point in the future: I'm gonna throw a firecracker at somebody. I dunno whether the 13th Note is right for it, though.
Paddy: I think you'd get straight-up thrown out if you did that in Glasgow. It's a different culture, it's not an everyday thing fucking blowing up fireworks when you're drunk.
Paddy: There are only so many venues you can get chucked out of.
Mick: You don't wanna be going 'round social centres in Europe setting off firecrackers and setting fire to Food Not Bombs stalls.

**MRR: What kind of reaction would you like to inspire in people watching you live?**
Crawford: Fireworks. I think fireworks or firearms. Gun running on a major scale. I just hope people would go crazy, but not just because they're pissed or whatever, but because we're raging. Even if someone doesn't wanna mosh...
Tony: I just hope they have a very good time.
Crawford: An angry time, but in a positive manner.
Paddy: I do like it when there's a bit of energy.

**MRR: All the records you've done before this 12" were self-released, but this time 'round you've had other labels involved. What was the thinking behind your initial choice to self-release, and why was there a change?**
Crawford: Well, Ellis (Static Shock Records) was gonna put the first 7" out, but I think 4 Past Midnight had something in the pipeline.
Paddy: He's always going on about 4 Past Midnight.
Crawford: I suppose it just comes with the territory, just fucking put it out yourself.
Mick: I think it's a good thing to do initially, anyway, because whilst you make contacts touring, you also make things trading records and stuff like that. It was actually a beneficial way to get contacts for the second tour we did.
Crawford: I think the practical and physical side of it too, like pressing plants, getting it mastered, all that shit. It's edifying as well.
Paddy: The second record had just a white label, so making a linocut made each of them nice and unique.
Mick: With the money we had at the time of the LP, and the things we were planning to do, it would have been too much of a financial undertaking to be able to press 500 copies by ourselves and then send copies to the States and stuff like that. And with Dan from SPHC and Kunal from Superfi, these are people who we trust and that we respect and who have shown an interest in the band already, so it was a no-brainer for us to work with them.

**MRR: As far as your lyrics go, especially on the LP, a lot of them seem quite personal, but then you have some which seem to be about the punk scene.**
Crawford: Not so much now. I suppose the older you get, the more introverted or even misanthropic you get. On the LP, I was working a really shit job, and I've worked shit jobs for a long time. It was just, like, waking up every day and feeling like a piece of shit, going to my job, feeling like a piece of shit...It was just an outlet which I suppose is better than substance abuse or something like that. I suppose that was the LP, it was just me hating myself and everything.



**MRR: What's the current state of hardcore in Glasgow?**
Crawford: It's dead, man. It'll get better: These things go in peaks and troughs. There's my new band, called Sick of Talk, and Droves, which has the same drummer, but they're more like grind or powerviolence. Droves are amazing. The guitarist is a wank, though. But for me, that's it.
Paddy: As far as you'd call a scene, there's not many bands. You couldn't put on a decent all-dayer in Glasgow right now.
Crawford: The couple of years around when we started, that's probably the best it's been that I can remember. I forgot about In Tongues as well.
Paddy: In Tongues are really amazing, they're heavy. I'd say they're—
Crawford: Shite.
Paddy: They're really good, they're my boys! They're more metal, though, which is good, obviously, but as far as hardcore bands go, to answer your question, not much.
Crawford: There's a big beatdown scene in Glasgow, but I've never really understood that.
Mick: Maybe Anxiety, who just started recently, too. The whole thing with Glasgow is that it doesn't have clearly delineated music scenes and a lot of things flow into each other. Hardcore punk and punk is what I like to see and listen to, but if it turns out that there's more vibrancy or stuff going on in another scene, that's not bad either. I don't want to end up like a caricature, saying you've got to play music

in a certain way. There are bands doing things in Glasgow that are interesting, but not necessarily "punk" punk.

Crawford: Me and Paddy were talking about it because Sick of Talk played here last night with some bands where I don't really know what kind of music they are, but there's that kind of crossover with the art school scene.

Paddy: There's a big art scene, and like Mick's saying, and I'm sure Crawford will agree, there's nothing wrong with that, and I love so many fucking bands I see. I just don't know why a fast hardcore band like us has been so accepted.

**MRR: It seems bands touring in the UK still make an effort to get up to Glasgow, right?**

Crawford: Yeah, definitely. The last couple of gigs I put on have been absolutely packed out, apart from Diswolf. That was dead...but they were really shite and stole Paddy's jacket. I did one for La Misma recently, and that was so busy, with a lot of people I didn't recognize, too, which is reassuring.

Paddy: People still turn out for good shows and bands wanna come here and play because people will put them on. There's just not a rapid turnover of fast bands, and there have never been two or three shows a week.

**MRR: What bands would you say are the best sort of bands going right now, if you've not already said?**

Crawford: Skiplickers, and they must be verging on a ten-year anniversary, but they're easily one of my favorite bands.

Mick: I would definitely recommend people check out a band called Siega from here in Barcelona. Fucking harsh, political punk, no pose to it. Just stripped down, nothing getting in the way, super lean. They're fucking great. Also in Dublin there's quite a few bands.

Crawford: Surge, which is people from Gaze. They're really good.

Mick: If people haven't checked out Gaze, they should.

Crawford: Disguise, Scumheads, New Gods, Overbite. Dublin's got a really cool scene.

**MRR: Are there any gigs that stand out in terms of the reaction you received?**

Crawford: I thought Slovenia. We played Metelkova in Ljubljana. That was one of my favorites.

**MRR: Metelkova can be strange. Sometimes in the week it's absolutely dead, even for good bands, but then at the weekend it can be rammed.**

Paddy: Milan was fucking brilliant.

Mick: It was a struggle to get through at first because it was chaotic and we didn't play 'til after midnight, having been there since about four or five in the afternoon.

Crawford: But Permanent Ruin played and they absolutely slayed it.

Mick: Some of my favourite gigs have been in Scotland, though. Some in Glasgow have been fantastic.

Crawford: The Gaze gig in Glasgow was one of my favorites. It was packed out.

Mick: When we played with Crazy Spirit. The second time with Coke Bust. The last two gigs we did on the last tour, in London and Sheffield, were fantastic as well.

Crawford: That was the perfect end to a really awesome tour. Sheffield especially. It was at Audacious Art Experiment. I was down there recently because I had some time to kill and saw Sheer Mag and met a few pals down there. People came up to me and mentioned that gig—that was fucking nice, man.

**MRR: What are the best and worst bands you've played with? You don't have to say worst if you don't want to.**

Crawford: Best bands, right: Death Job from Sheffield, Permanent Ruin, Skiplickers.

Mick: Agent Attitude. Piss, for sure.

Paddy: Sufferinfuck were amazing for me every single time.

Crawford: That band we played with in Slovenia, the old dudes that sounded like Raw Power. Pasmasters. They sang in Italian, but weren't Italian. They were incredible.

Paddy: I was stoned at a lot of these shows man, I can't remember.

Mick: The bands I slept through in Paris, I've been assured, were the worst.

Crawford: Oh shit yeah.

Tony: The old guys?

Crawford: Nah, the young guys. The old guys were shite. But ...

Paddy: The young ones were like fucking Stereophonics.

Crawford: Super expensive gear.

Paddy: I got ripped off for weed at that show as well, that was a fucking bad night. It was the night before my birthday, had the worst night of my life.

Mick: One band we played with in Edinburgh, the singer was really young—

Crawford: And the bass player was eating a bag of chips. I was just like, what the fuck is this shit, man? To be fair, the singer was pretty good. I said to the bass player after, I was like, "I've never seen anyone eat a bag of chips onstage," and he was like, "Cheers, man!" and shook my hand. I was like, "That was not a compliment, there's no need for that shit."

Mick: They were just a strange mix of people. The kid doing vocals was 18 and was super into Orchid or whatever. Then the bassist was just a guy in his construction gear—big boots and luminous vest—eating a bag of chips. The guitarist was—I dunno what was going on with him, but you know those furry dice you get to hang in cars? He had those on the end of his guitar. He was old, and really rocking out, kind of like '70s rock mode. The drummer was probably the most right-on guy, but I can't remember him because he didn't have his own schtick.

Crawford: I forgot about Poison Idea too, they're definitely one of the best bands we've played with.

**MRR: Twice now we've had a gig playing with them cancelled.**

Crawford: Is that when he lost his voice?

**MRR: Yeah "lost his voice..."**

Crawford: They were fucking incredible. They've been one of my favourite bands for fifteen years now, and they blew me away.
Mick: There was this weird thing at this gig, though, like we were the youngest people in the crowd, all in our late twenties or early thirties.
Crawford: I'm thirty by the way, not early thirties.
Mick: Okay, late twenties. So the crowd was kind of old, and they opened up with two or three songs from the new record.
Crawford: Then they did "AA" and the place just went mental.
Mick: That was the thing—I think it must be difficult being one of these bands.
Crawford: You'd be sore all the time.
Mick: But you've got that kind of tension between writing new songs or playing what people want. And I think the new record they did was decent.

**MRR: Sometimes those bands that have that instinct to carry on doing new stuff—that isn't terrible, anyway—it's indicative of their overall approach; if they're involved or connected with punk and hardcore now, instead of coming back for the odd show, rehashing stuff which everyone will lap up anyway.**
Mick: I think the equivalent in Scotland would maybe be Oi Polloi. I dunno what you'd call it...history makes it seem wanky, but they're a kind of bridge to older scenes or scenes in other countries. A band from your backyard that backup what they sing through their actions and don't rest on their laurels.

**MRR: It's always good to have that local example that you can stay relevant and you don't have to drop out or be an embarrassment just because you've been around for twenty years or so. For me, at least, I've become increasingly less interested in reformations almost out of principle, even if it's a band I love.**
Paddy: It depends who is getting back together, if they're a good band. I don't think there's any law against getting your band back together.
Crawford: Nah man, have you ever read that Charles Bronson discog they put out where the last line is just "fuck bands that don't stay broken up"? I've always kind of been into that.
Mick: I'd agree, I think in, like, nine out of ten cases it's a bad idea.

**MRR: I suppose it's difficult if you've still got that creative impulse. There's now a degree of skepticism around things you might do because of that nostalgia industry and its disconnect with what is currently happening. People who want something punk related aren't forced to do stuff for themselves, or search things out that were maybe a little bit more underground and contemporary, because they have their impulse satisfied to an extent by seeing the bigger, older bands.**
Mick: I think a lot of people's tastes get kind of fossilized in their late twenties or early thirties: they know what they like.
Crawford: I've definitely gotten much more narrow minded the last couple of years.
Mick: Often you're not looking for something that's new to you anymore. You've filled your bucket with all the music that you like, you want to go to something because you know you'll like it. Other people maintain that curiosity to see new things, but I think for a lot of people it becomes concrete and rigid what they're into, stylistically and musically.
Paddy: I think unless your band became a significant band, nobody's gonna care if you reform, so why does it even matter? Just start a new band. Just go and continue to see bands. Whether you think you're gonna like it or not, just go and see a band.
Crawford: Go and see a band. Why don't we just sum it up as that. Go and have a laugh and see a band.

**MRR: What's the deal with you in the future now?**
Crawford: For me, at least, we're at a stage where we've been a band for five years, so we can play the odd gig now and again, especially because of Mick's geographical disposition. I'm totally fine with that, when we can get together, but Mick should totally hook us up with a tour of Spain.
Mick: After a certain amount of time there's only so much playing in your own backyard you can do.
Crawford: Without being a pop punk band.
Mick: Or without burning yourself or other people out. We're trying to get a Spanish tour organized in spring, and we're talking with Dysnea Boys from Berlin about doing a split 7". If that happens, then I'm sure it'll open up the chance for doing some more shows in summer.

**MRR: Anything else you wanna mention?**
Crawford: When are you gonna play me at darts? You've been shitting out of it, you were talking a big game about it, all sorts of shit about Uri Geller. Did you buy a dartboard?

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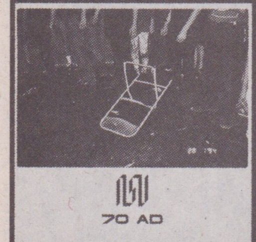


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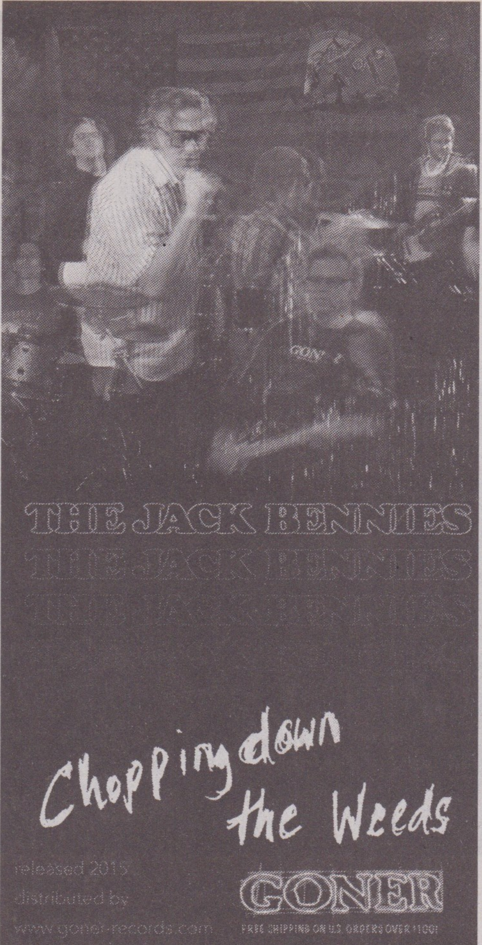


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# The LANDLORDS

*Interview and introduction by Sam Richardson. Photos provided by Mike Brooks, Barbara Vaughan, Larry Houchens, and Michael Buck.*

*As a teenager growing up in the quaint college town of Charlottesville, Virginia, I never expected there to be much of a local punk or hardcore lineage, let alone bands that had documented their sound on record. When I first discovered the Landlords and 1984's* Hey! It's A Teenage House Party! *LP, I couldn't believe what I was hearing. Disguised with cover artwork scrawled by a first grader, the 21 songs on this LP are incendiary tongue-in-cheek blasts that could only have been composed by some real punk rock characters. While interviewing their singer John Beers for an issue of my old zine, I learned that the Landlords had recorded a second album,* Fitzgerald's Paris, *from 1985–87, right as Beers and guitarist Charlie Kramer's other project, Happy Flowers, took off. In 2015 I was finally able to hear cassette dubs taken from its reels and was simply blown away by the playing, production, and overall direction that the Landlords had taken. It's a vibrant, warped ride through the mid '80s, as hardcore was beginning to fade while weirder, noisier bands championed by labels like SST started to take over. The Landlords somehow captured this sound perfectly on* Fitzgerald's Paris, *and I'm extremely proud to have been involved in the production and upcoming release of the album in 2016. Here's a conversation with my hometown heroes and true weirdos, the Landlords.*

**MRR: Can you guys each tell us a bit about your musical background and how the Landlords formed?**

John Beers: I ignored music until I was eleven or twelve. I realized the other kids knew the hit songs, but I didn't, so I started listening to the radio. Despite hating loud noises when I was a kid, I was immediately drawn to the hard rock and heavy metal end of the spectrum. Kiss was my first concert without parents, and it wasn't long before I was a card-carrying member of the Kiss Army. I was always looking for something faster and heavier back then. I heard about punk rock and stayed up late one night when I was thirteen to see the Ramones on *Don Kirshner's Rock Concert*. Unfortunately, I thought they were terrible; all of their songs sounded the same, and Johnny couldn't play a solo to save his life. That turned me off punk rock for the next four years, until I saw the Dead Kennedys "Kill the Poor" single at my local store and *had* to buy it, thanks to my dark sense of humor. After that, I bought the rest of the Dead Kennedys records the store had, plus albums by the Damned and Sex Pistols. The summer between twelveth grade and college, *The Washington Post* ran a story on the DC hardcore scene, so I ended up buying the first few 7"s on Dischord, plus the early Black Flag records. I was officially hooked.

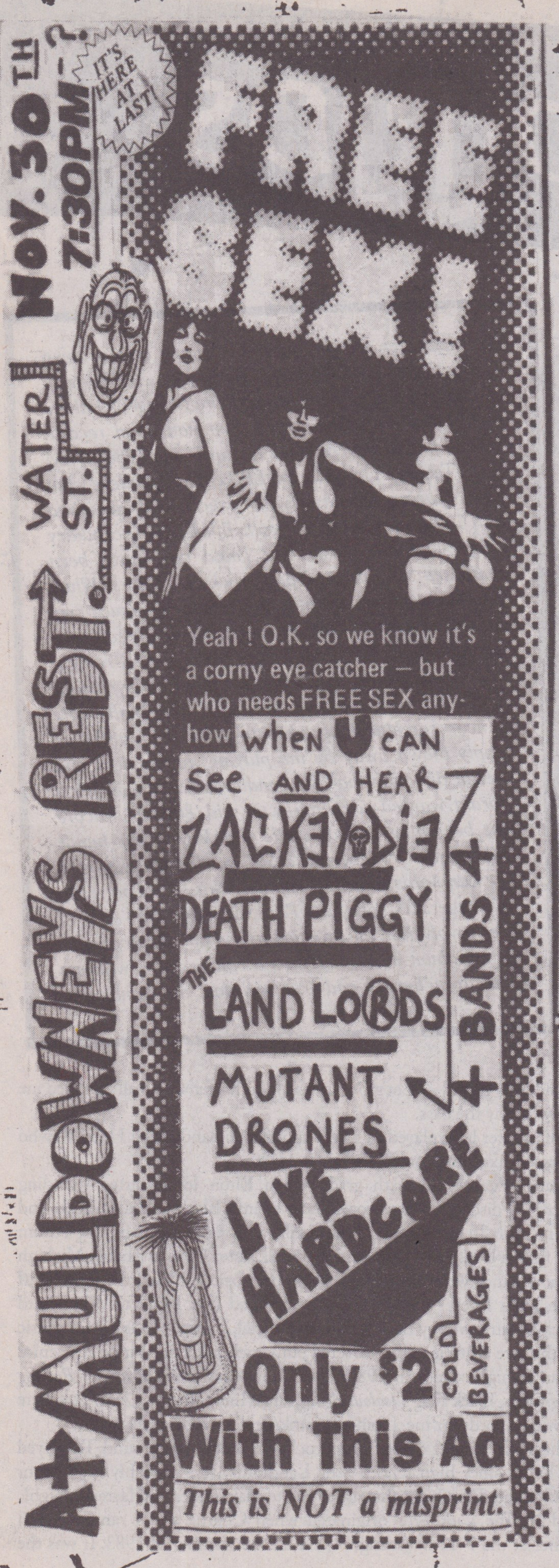
Eddie Jetlag: Before I moved to Charlottesville, I had been playing bass in a few punk bands in Arlington, VA: Zeno and the Stoics, Black Cop, and Mr. Ray's Hair Weave. Needless to say, none of them went very far. Still, Mr. Ray's was a very cool band, and it featured John Kiefer on guitar who later moved to Richmond and played in some seminal bands in that scene—Judge Dread and Always August (the latter band released three records with SST). Mr. Ray's also wrote one of the songs on the first Landlords' record—"Let's Go." It was John Kiefer who really showed me how to play the bass.

John: Kiefer later played in a very cool fusion band called Hotel X, who released six albums on SST in the mid '90s.

Tristan Puckett: In sixth grade, when Elton John started sounding wimpy, I discovered hard rock, and was into Black Sabbath, Rush, and Aerosmith. In ninth grade (1980) I talked my parents into buying a drum kit from a local pawn shop, and two weeks later I was in a band. My high school bands were mostly hard rock cover bands. I liked the faster stuff like Judas Priest's *Unleashed in the East* and Iron Maiden. When hard rock became wimpy hair-band heavy metal, I started looking for music with more attitude and discovered punk rock/hardcore during my senior year of high school in 1982. Dead Kennedys' *Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables*, Black Flag's *Jealous Again*, and Minor Threat's *Out of Step* were pivotal records for me. I joined a punk/new wave band that year.

Charlie Kramer: I came from a rock and metal background. I'd played in bands since high school—the Landlords were probably my fifth or sixth band. First band that asked me to play louder and faster though!

Eddie: The Landlords originated when Charlie and I ran into each other at the 7-11 in Arlington, VA, in the summer of 1983. It was the




middle of the night, I believe. He learned I was transferring to UVA and suggested that we form a band once we were in Charlottesville. With that in the back of my mind, I visited the WTJU radio station during my first week and I ran into John Beers for the first time. Within a few minutes or so we were already talking about forming a punk rock band.

John: He told me he knew an amazing guitarist and was starting a band, so I rather brazenly told him I would sing, despite no experience other than the church choir (from which I was forcibly ejected in sixth or seventh grade) and glee club at summer camp.

Eddie: John had a friend who knew of a freshman pledging at one of the UVA fraternities who played the drums. I volunteered to go visit him in his dorm and make an offer. Tristan opened the door—a skinny, wiry kid with spiked hair. He quietly listened to my offer and then laid down his two conditions for being in the band: 1) We play fast. 2) We don't play AC/DC. "Done," I said. The Landlords were practicing before the end of the week.

**MRR: I'm imagining practicing in the basement or living room of a rental house, a bunch of guys cracking bad jokes to each other, maybe some cheap beer and classic rock riffs flying around in between songs…I mean, what kind of environment spawns songs like "Nuns in Black Leather?"**

Eddie: We had a bunch of different practice spots all over the UVA area; our first one was in the living room of a group house I shared with my brother and some other students. The others were usually in basement. We usually practiced two or three times a week, and, believe it or not, we hardly ever drank beer. As a result, practices were often efficient and business-like.

John: In the early days, we used to map out songs on big sheets of paper as we constructed them. Some songs were brought to practice completely written, though, such as "More Guts Tonight" by Eddie and "Mountain Don't" by me. Most were written collectively, usually based around a set of lyrics one of us had already written. One of the

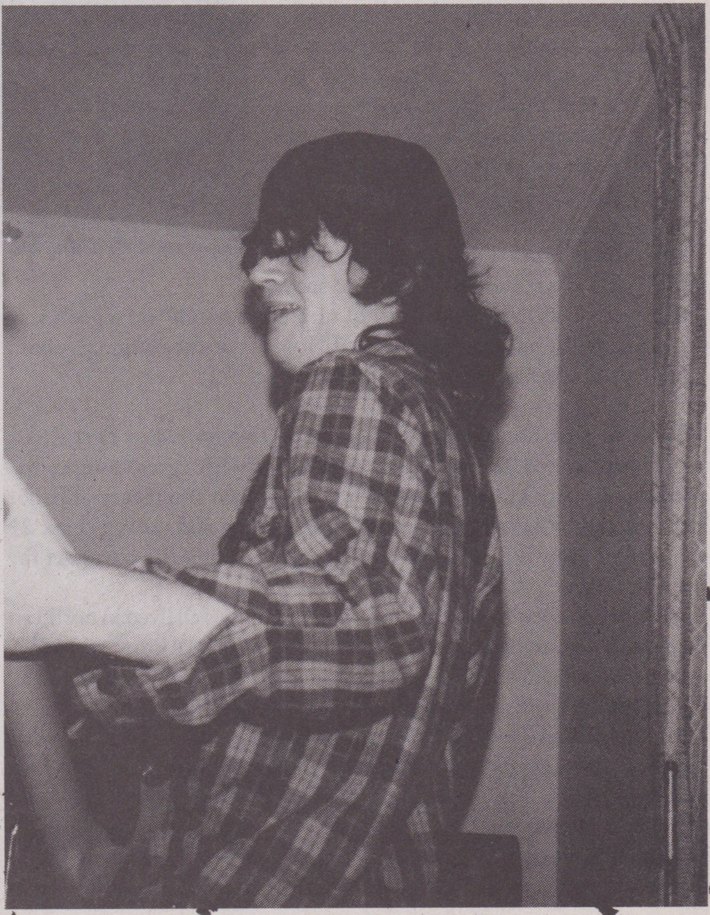
exceptions was "Girls," which Eddie and I wrote at one of UVA's dining facilities. We traded lines, so see if you can figure out which lines were written by the straight guy and which were penned by the closet case with no interest in girls. Another we wrote like that was "My Monotony."
Charlie: I wrote "Nuns in Black Leather" in my Public Economics class.
Tristan: It wasn't the practice environment that spawned "Nuns," but Charlie's stint in Catholic school. And not much beer for me, I had studying to do. But any item not nailed down at rehearsal was fair game for Charlie to use as a slide. Charlie created some hilariously awesome sounds with his liberal use of slide, whammy bar and wah wah pedal.

Charlie used to work the solo from "Don't Stop Believing" into many of the songs. And now that that song is overplayed in movies, commercials, and old-fart-cover-bands, I can listen to it with a smirk, remembering Charlie playing the solo with his teeth and a whammy bar.
John: I mostly remember Charlie chewing gum all the time. Constantly. When we jammed he'd get really into what he was playing, his jaw would go slack and the gum would fall on the floor. H*e'd pick it up and put it back in his mouth*!

The second place we lived and practiced featured neighbors to the right who called the cops on us constantly for noise. Ironically, the neighbors on the left included drug dealers, a guy who was arrested and convicted first for bilking UVA out of $61K with a fake secret society, then some years later for child molestation, plus a guy on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list. Good times.

**MRR: That brings us to the first show that the Landlords ever played. Whose idea was it to enter a talent showcase at The Holiday Inn on Route 29? How did the unsuspecting crowd take it?**
Eddie: It was so not hardcore, but screw it—I'll play anywhere.
We had a fairly loyal contingent in the audience—Aaron Margosis (who wound up taping it—quick thinking!), Kenny Ayscue, Barbara Vaughan, et al—but they were no match for the yokel management. They pulled the plug on us after three tunes. "Get the hell out, now, and I mean now." The emcee was a singer in a local band, and she was actually supportive—"These guys… I love these guys…" But again, there's no fighting the man.
John: It may have been my idea, but I'm not at all positive. I honestly don't remember the crowd, just the manager's reaction. He was *pissed*. We were escorted out of the building, and they watched to make sure we left. We all went to my friend Aaron's apartment after, and Eddie called the club an hour or so later to ask when we could come pick up our winnings.
Tristan: We have a tape of some of that show, and I think we sounded slow and sloppy. We had not been together very long, and neither the band nor the songs had gelled yet. We were still loud and fast by the day's standards. And, if that wasn't enough to pull the plug on the set, when Charlie grabbed an Indian corn centerpiece from one of the tables and used it as a slide for his guitar, that certainly was enough to get us thrown out.

**MRR: The early punk and hardcore scene in Charlottesville seems to have been a pretty good mix of people: bands like Lackey Die (townies), Beef People (boarding school students), and the Landlords (UVA students). Were shows generally set up for bigger touring bands or was it more of a regional scene based around smaller shows and parties? What were some of your favorite bands to play with?**
John: It definitely started out small and regional. Andy Lilston did the early booking at Muldowney's Pub, a tiny lesbian bar downtown the guys in Lackey Die found that was willing to let punk bands play. Outside of Lackey Die, the Landlords, and Baby Opaque, it was mostly bands from Richmond, Blacksburg, and Washington, D.C. (outside the Dischord circle). Sex on TV came down a bunch of times from DC and were always great. Death Piggy, from Richmond, were my favorite to play with. Of course, they eventually morphed into Gwar.
Eddie: By 1984, it was pretty normal for us to travel to Richmond and play with some of the main bands there—White Cross, Prevaricators, Honor Role, Graven Image, Death Piggy, and Judge Dread.



After a year or so, Karen Wanker started booking gigs at Trax—a huge cavern of a room that fit about 800-900 people, maybe more. Although we still got a lot of Richmond bands, we also began to attract more DC acts, and then national ones as well. The Landlords were often included in those shows—we played with COC, Butthole Surfers, Dead Kennedys, Agnostic Front, Dag Nasty, and a bunch of others as well. By 1985, C'ville was becoming a place for underground and college bands to play—we can definitely thank Karen for putting the town on the map.

These days it seems that the best shows in C'ville are at house parties like Magnolia or cool co-op clubs like Tea Bazaar or the old Atomic Burrito. Although we did play a few parties, the scene pretty much revolved around the clubs.

**MRR: How important was it to have a local punk radio show on WTJU?**

Eddie: WTJU was a huge supporter of the scene. John had a hardcore hour once a week, and he was so kind to bring me on board in 1983.

John: Eddie was an awesome co-host and taught me a lot about music beyond metal, punk, and hardcore, like Julie London. I'd like to think my radio show was important, but it'd be presumptuous of me to say it was. We did used to get tons of requests, though, so I know we had listeners.

Eddie: His radio show most certainly helped bring all the punks out of the woodwork—both UVA students and townfolk. No doubt the best thing about the scene was its inclusiveness—local high school kids, boarding school kids, college students, older townies, younger townies, long hairs, skinheads, the whole shebang.

Tristan: Sometimes I would go down to WTJU and hang around during his show. Other local folks in the scene would turn up too, so it was a good way to connect with musicians and fans. If I wasn't at the station, I would often tape the hardcore shows to listen to later.

**MRR: The first Landlords LP, *Hey! It's A Teenage House Party!*, is a totally underrated American hardcore record with a great tongue-in-cheek sensibility. Why did you guys choose to go and record at Inner Ear Studios? What was the process of recording and mixing those 21 songs like? How did each of you react upon seeing the cover art for the first time?**

John: Inner Ear was *the* place to record! Our families all lived in northern Virginia, so we could stay at home while recording. Also, it was super cheap. I don't remember how much it cost to do *House Party*, but the first Happy Flowers 7" cost us $50, and that was including the tape! To top it off, Don Zientara is one of the nicest guys on the planet. Eddie: The process was pretty straightforward, and in retrospect, you gotta love the simplicity: 1) Set up the equipment. 2) Tune the instruments—we didn't even use tuners! 3) Play all the songs live, with John doing a scratch vocal track; usually we just did a few takes. 4) John would then overdub the vocal track. 5) Backup vocals. 6) After recording, we would return for another session for mixing. We recorded at Inner Ear for the first time on a weekend in March 1984. On Saturday, we recorded; the next day, we mixed. I wish it were still so simple…

Tristan: As someone who has been in recording bands for the last 33 years, I get a kick out of how the Landlords would usually play a song no more than three times in the studio, and just keep the best version, warts and all. That's just not how it's done. I'm impressed that the songs sound as good as they do. We could knock out half an album in a weekend, though, and still have a blast doing it.

Eddie: As for the cover artwork—I honestly can't remember why we went with a six-year-old's artwork…Perhaps it was our way of not taking ourselves too seriously, always a good thing, I guess.

John: I loved it! My only regret is I put the band name at the bottom, when I should have put it at the top, so it would stand out better when folks were flipping through records at the store. I probably should have used a picture of us for the back cover or something, though, instead of the circled R. C'est la vie.

**MRR: How was the LP received? Did the Landlords make it out of town much to promote the LP, or were you guys more focused on writing and performing new material?**

John: We got mostly positive reviews. It sold pretty well, though I should have pressed 1,000 rather than 1,500. The most unexpected reaction was in Poland. Somehow, we got a following there, and kids kept sending me Polish punk records to trade for our LP, I guess 'cause they couldn't send money. Sometimes the Polish government would open the packages and replace the punk records with more politically acceptable (i.e. terrible, commercial) ones.

We used to play Richmond fairly frequently, usually with Death Piggy, but didn't make it out of town much, otherwise. We tried in vain to get gigs in DC, but were pretty much shut out by dint of not having a Dischord connection. After years of trying, we finally got booked at the Hung Jury Pub, but they didn't bother letting us know until a few days beforehand, and we couldn't make it. We were not pleased when we found out later that they put us on the fliers and friends of ours in the area came to see us (not) play! We did manage to play CBGB a couple of times, Baltimore once, Virginia Beach once (twice?), and Raleigh, at the invitation of COC, with whom we played at CBGB and Trax.

Eddie: For some reason, we were never able to organize a true tour. My guess is that we were too busy working in the summer; or doing school-related things (like taking classes). By 1985, the pattern was for us to do an occasional out of town gig but rely mainly on local gigs with out of town acts.

John did a very good job documenting the album's reception—if I recall correctly, it got reviewed in a few zines, and it was received favorably.

Tristan: I was happy to play whatever gigs we got. I was more focused on school. I bet I barely got into UVA, and I had to work my ass off to not fail out—really.

Charlie: From my point of view, I'm not sure I had much of a strategy in mind. I just wanted to get out there and make some loud, obnoxious rock'n'roll. God, I sound like Mick Mars.

**MRR: It seems like between the release of *Hey! It's A Teenage House Party!* in 1984 and the recording of *Fitzgerald's Paris* between 1985 and 1987 that the sound and style of the band developed quite a bit. What influenced the shift towards songs like "Stigmata" and "Press the Bar" that appear on *Fitzgerald's Paris*?**

John: We got older, for one!

Tristan: John, Eddie, and I shared a house (Trout Manor) for two years (until I couldn't take living with slobs anymore, and shared a house with Eddie's tidy girlfriend, whom he later married) and John had an amazing record collection. John was always playing music in the house, and I got a great punk/hardcore education. John subliminally influenced the direction of the band with whatever he played.

Charlie: For me, it was a lot of the bands that John introduced me to, like Big Black, Killdozer, Swans, Sonic Youth, etc. John really opened my ears to a lot of great music!

John: The musical landscape was shifting. A lot of noisy bands were hitting the scene, and I (and the other guys) dug the ugliness of folks like Big Black, Scratch Acid, Live Skull, etc. Naturally, that had an effect on our writing. One big thing I picked up from Live Skull was the idea of staying in standard tuning (unlike, say, Sonic Youth) whilst making up non-standard chords to use. "Press the Bar," "Burning," and "The Strange House" had me playing guitar using almost all unconventional chords, as opposed to barre chords. I love how they turned out, but I can remember little of what I played on them! "Stigmata," on the other hand, was all tritones (i.e., the diabolus in musica). Charlie played guitar on that one, of course, but I wrote the majority of the music (Charlie and Eddie were responsible for the instrumental break, while the intro, verses, and chorus were mine).

Revolution Summer was going on in DC at the time, and that had a bit of an influence as well, though I hated that term. In fact, Don Z. wrote "Rites of Spring" for the title of "Critical Toast" on the log sheets for the session, that scamp! Then again, I'm not sure if we had a proper title for it at that point. I was really proud of it, but I don't think we ever played it live.

Eddie: I think the more noticeable shift is on side one of *Fitzgerald's Paris*—"Justified," "Empty Rhetoric," "Dance with Me," "Verbal Attack," etc. Side one dates from late 1984 through late 1985, before the noise turn. Everything just started getting so much better—songwriting, lyrics, performances, and also the recording. The songs were still incredibly fast, but they always rolled. Chalk it up to experience, I guess.

The noisy songs on side two tended to come more from John and Charlie, I think. Perhaps the Happy Flowers influenced us…"Stigmata" is probably the all-around best tune on the whole record (recording, songwriting, performance)—that could have only come from the mind of Mr. Horribly Charred Infant…

John: Our writing was getting more out there, we were playing fewer and fewer club shows and more house parties. At parties, we tended to play lots of silly covers and avoid the uglier originals, for whatever reason. Playing parties instead of clubs was not by design, by the way; it just got more and more difficult for us to find gigs. That was part of what eventually broke us up, sadly. Frustration.

**MRR: So *Fitzgerald's Paris* ended up being recorded twice? What exactly was the entire process like? The production seems to have been given a lot more consideration. How did switching instruments come about?**

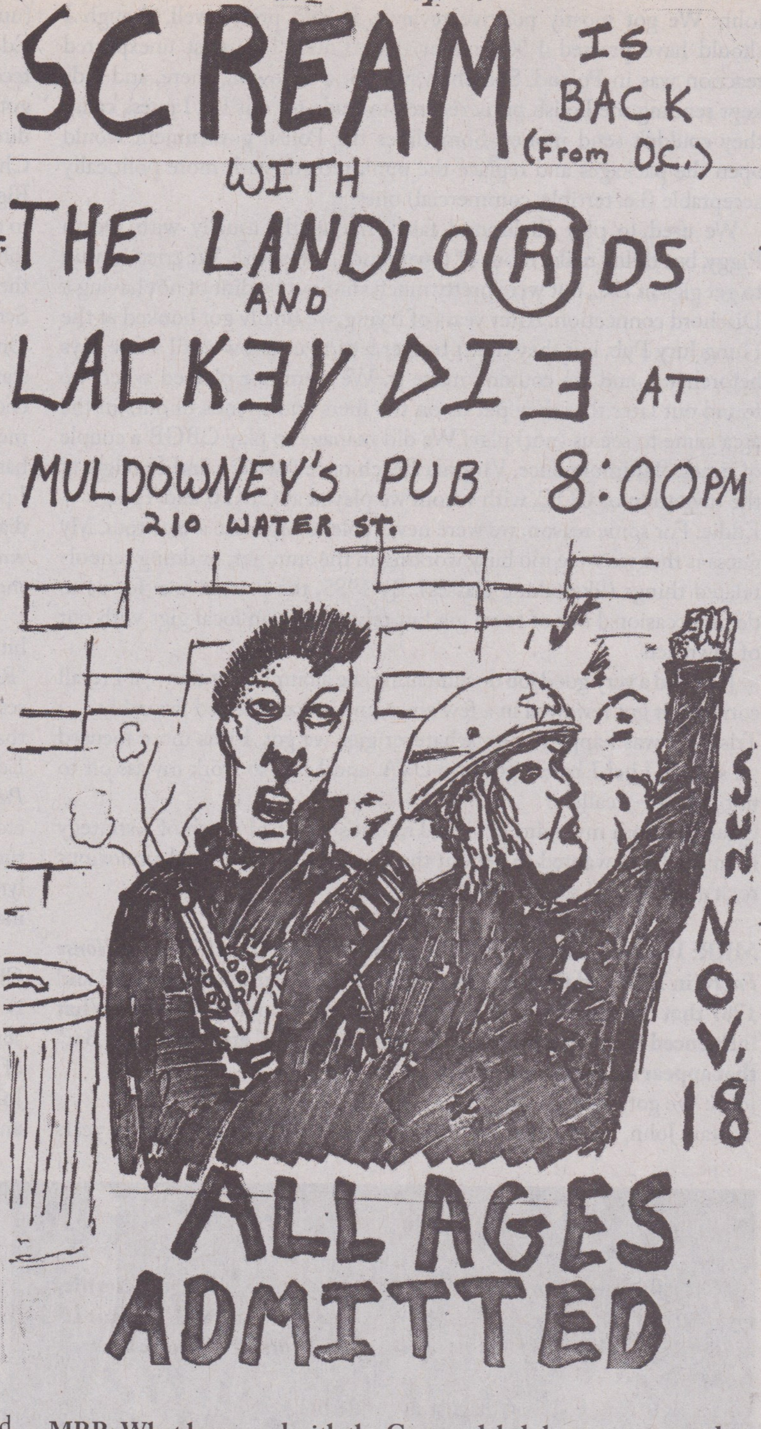
John: Yeah, for reasons I don't completely recall, we didn't release it right away after recording it. A year passed, and we had several new songs that were a lot stronger than what we'd recorded the first time around, so we decided to go back to Inner Ear. That had historical precedence, too, as *House Party* was recorded over

two different sessions with several months between.

We definitely spent more time on the production than we did with *House Party*. With the guitar, for example, I got the idea from ZZ Top to use multiple amps and mix them together. It was split between my Marshall, Charlie's Crate, and a little cardboard box amp Charlie had made with a 3" speaker. We also ran Eddie's bass through some effects. For example, the Happy Flowers' bass distortion box that Don Z. built was used on the break in "Empty Rhetoric" and some stereo effect thing Don had was used in places like the ending of "Countess Sophia" to make it sound more full. The tracks were still all recorded live with only vocals being overdubbed. We also did things like double tracking the vocals in some spots, like on alternating lines on "My Head Throbs," and adding that blast of piano to the ending of "Critical Toast." One thing I was proud of, though, was we still sounded full when Charlie dropped into a solo, as a lot of bands will record rhythm guitar in sections with solos then go back and overdub the solos themselves.

Instrument switching came about 'cause I was getting better at guitar and writing kinda weird stuff. On those songs, it just seemed to make sense to switch it up. Charlie's bass style was a lot different from Eddie's, and Eddie's singing was from another planet, so that brought another dimension, as well.

Tristan: I forgot we had recorded it twice until I recently heard the tapes. I remember John got a Gibson SG and constantly carried it around the house. With any spare moment he would thrash out a few chords. It was cool to see his guitar playing evolve from nothing to being able to write songs and play guitar live (leads too!).




**MRR: What happened with the German label that was supposed to release *Fitzgerald's Paris*? Why was the last Landlords release a four-song 7" of cover songs?**

Tristan: There was a German label that wanted to release the album?! Why am I just hearing about this?

John: They were interested in doing a co-release 'cause *House Party* sold pretty well in Germany. We sent them a tape of the first version of *Fitzgerald's Paris*, and they were not so enthusiastic anymore. They said it sounded like a compilation album, since there was so much variety in the songs, and they didn't think the German fans would like it.

Oh, well. In retrospect, it was a good thing, since we ended up doing the second, far superior version.

We used to play tons of covers, often only once. I got the idea for doing a flexi of covers to include with *Fitzgerald's Paris*, but the other guys weren't thrilled with that, so I lobbied successfully for a vinyl EP instead. I really wanted to include our version of Bryan Adams' "Kids Wanna Rock," but the other guys voted me down, sadly. It was a

brilliantly idiotic attack on punk/new wave: *"For a couple of bucks / you can get a weird haircut / and waste your life away."*

Eddie: The 7" release seemed like a smart move at the time, but I definitely would have preferred *Fitzgerald's Paris*. We had an excellent cover for *Fitzgerald's Paris*, a sketch done by our friend Brian Chidley, but it's been lost to the sands of time…

**MRR: Would you say a collective sense of humor or sarcasm developed between the four of you guys? I remember John telling me that the "whoa-oh's" on "In Which the Scene Stole My Walkman" were a fun jab at pretty much every Naked Raygun song. What other twisted bits of humor are buried in Landlords songs?**

John: Oh, most definitely! We had lots of ridiculous catch phrases we used over-and-over. One of my favorites was "Do y'all like duplicity?", riffing on stupid metal bands saying stuff to crowds, like, "Do y'all like to eat pussy?". Another was "Death to your god!" which Eddie talked his girlfriend at the time into writing on the back of a receipt at the restaurant where she waited tables and he was a chef. The customers were not amused, but she somehow talked her way out of it! Thirty years later, by the way, they've been married for close to twenty-five years, and have two awesome kids.

Naked Raygun were not the only whoa-oh offenders, but they were one of the worst. We all agreed it was a huge cliché, so naturally we had to do it, too. Another little jab was at our friend Dave Smalley, whom Eddie knew from when he lived in Boston, before enrolling at UVA. When the second DYS album came out, he was listed as D. Christian Smalley in the credits, so we did the same thing on the back of the covers EP, where we became J. William Beers, C. Eduardo Jetlag, C. Frederick Kramer, and T. Tyree Puckett.

Eddie: In "Empty Rhetoric": "Oops, we didn't know the gun was loaded" is a direct quote from Ronald Reagan during one of his debates with Walter Mondale in 1984. What a god-awful president he was. For "Dance with Me": if you play "Georgy Girl" by the Seekers backwards, the line "There's another Georgy deep inside" says "Dance with me, fishnose." [The outro of] "My Head Throbs" is is a pretty shameless rip off of "We Wish You a Merry Xmas."

Charlie: I think our common sense of humor is one of the reasons we stayed together for a while. I find it difficult to take any music too seriously. I especially don't understand why punk rock gets put on a pedestal. I thought Rites of Spring were pretty amazing when I saw them at the 9:30 Club, but did it change my life, more than say, Iron Maiden? Not really.

**MRR: How was it coexisting in the shadow of UVA's huge fraternity and sorority life as punks? Songs like "Press the Bar" and "I Want It" seem to shed light on the unglorious endeavors of the jock lifestyle from an outsider's perspective.**

Charlie: There's a pretty disgusting underbelly at UVA, best ignored if possible. At the same time, Charlottesville had a nice punk and art subculture that existed outside the mainstream (read: asshole) world.

John: Frat boys are a scourge on humanity, for the most part. Tristan never ended up joining the one he was pledging, to the best of my recollection. "I Want It" was inspired by attitudes about sex in general, meaning situations where kids at the time apparently agreed that it was OK for a guy to *demand* sex from a woman. I was horrified.

Eddie: UVA was big enough to accommodate lots of different subcultures, so after a year or so we got used to inhabiting a sort of parallel universe of our own. Given how hostile, unreceptive, and downright dumb the students could be, I'm grateful that we actually had a radio station, supportive friends, promoters like Andy and Karen, and at least a few clubs to play in.

**MRR: Did you guys notice a change in people's reaction to your music as hardcore started to fade away in the mid '80s? Was Charlottesville a fairly decent home base or did the Landlords fare better on the road?**

Eddie: Bands definitely run through cycles—we hit our peak, so to speak, in 1985–86, and most of the songs from *Fitzgerald's Paris* come from that period. But I think the biggest change came from ourselves—we started to listen to and play different kinds of music. You can definitely hear the change on side two of *Fitzgerald's Paris*. By that time, when we played out, we hardly ever did any tunes from *Teenage House Party*, for instance. John and Charlie began to take off with the Happy Flowers.

With the exception of our gigs at Muldowney's, I recall our most receptive audiences in Richmond, Baltimore, and North Carolina, actually. I think we could have done better had we been from a bigger scene, *or* had we formed in Charlottesville about thirty years later—Magnolia House is a great scene. The rooms fill up real fast and the vibe is always cool.

Tristan: Charlottesville was okay, considering it was still a small town with a musically oblivious university. Virginia in general is not a great place for clubs because of the whacked liquor laws that force every music venue to be a restaurant as well.

**MRR: So did the band come to an end as you all graduated from college?**

John: Ironically, the Happy Flowers kinda killed the Landlords. Happy Flowers made up everything as we went along, never practiced, and got tons of attention, including a recording contract with the best label in the country, Homestead Records. The Landlords, on the other hand, practiced all the time, busted our asses writing material, and tried constantly to get gigs, all to ever-increasing apathy. It got extremely frustrating. After a house party sometime in the spring of 1987, I told the guys the next day that I quit. I think Charlie had also decided at the same time to bag it.

Eddie: I finished UVA in 1986 and was just starting graduate school; so was Charlie, I think. Since it seemed that *Fitzgerald's Paris* would never be coming out, the Landlords had definitely run their course.

**MRR: Any last words, 'Lords?**

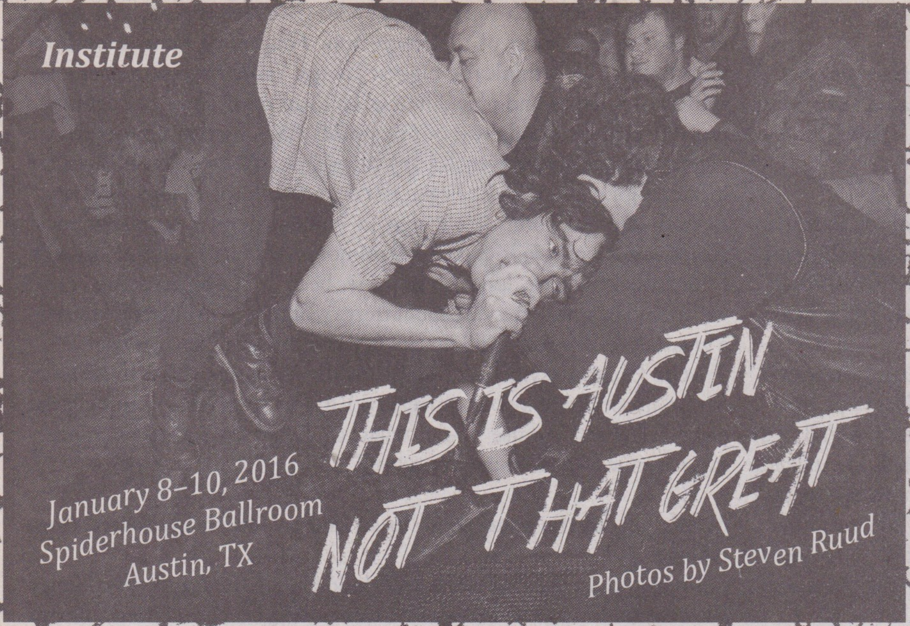
John: I've been lugging these master tapes around for nearly 30 years, in the hope that someone might one day release the album. I was also hoping, after he did the Lackey Die EP, that Sam would be interested. I was pleased as punch when you emailed me to ask if we'd like to release it! Also, I will kill your god.

Eddie: I gotta thank Sam Richardson of Feel It Records for seeing this whole project through—from its inception to its release, exemplary DIY entrepreneurship. We owe you, my man!

Charlie: Man—I have to tell you, I had such a great time playing in that band. I have really great memories and a lot of fond recollections about Tristan, Colum, and John. Great guys and awesome musicians.

Tristan: *Rock and roll without rent control!*

Fitzgerald's Paris *is available from Feel It Records: feelitrecords.bigcartel.com*



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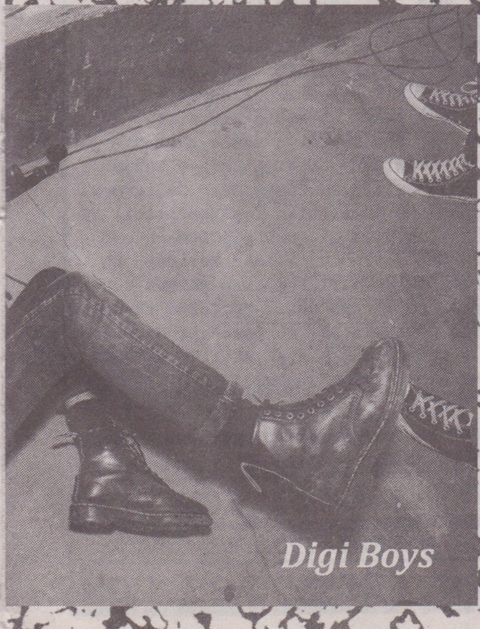

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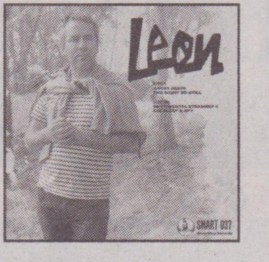

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# CONSTANT INSULT

*Constant Insult plays punk in a catchy kind of way that hits you hard. It's poppy for sure, but intense—the lyrics are bitter, and the bullshit is nowhere to be found. The band features current and ex-members of Earth Hater, Hard Feelings, Frozen Teens, Alas Alas, Uranium Club, and more. Catch them playing in a South Minneapolis basement, or invite them to come play in your town.*

*Interview by Gary Dever at the Seward Cafe in October 2015. Photos provided by Shellshag and Scott Troyan.*

Katie: Guitar, Vocals / Mike: Bass / Will: Guitar, Vocals / Matt: Drums

**MRR: You started the band, made the demo, and went on tour pretty quickly. Tell me about how it all came together.**
Katie: Mike and I had talked about having a band together for a long time—
Mike: For like two and a half years.
Katie: We would just text band names back and forth to each other all the time. We started talking to Will and we decided we wanted to make a band that sounded like the Rolling Stones meets the Marked Men, which is definitely not what we sound like.
Will: Not really at all.
Matt: Mike asked me after a Uranium Club show.
Mike: I had never met Matt, but then I saw Uranium Club. We were trying to figure out who the fourth person should be.
Katie: We didn't even have it decided who would play what. Will, Mike, and I had been friends for a really long time. They were some of my earliest friends since becoming a "thinking" person as a young teen in Minneapolis.
Mike: Me and Katie met at the first ever Frozen Teens show or, at least, the morning after. I went with Ski to pick up his drums.
Katie: Yeah, I don't know why, but I just came over to help clean up. It was at Suburbia. I was like fifteen and I was like, "I gotta pay my dues" or some bullshit. "I'll go clean up after a show at Suburbia!"

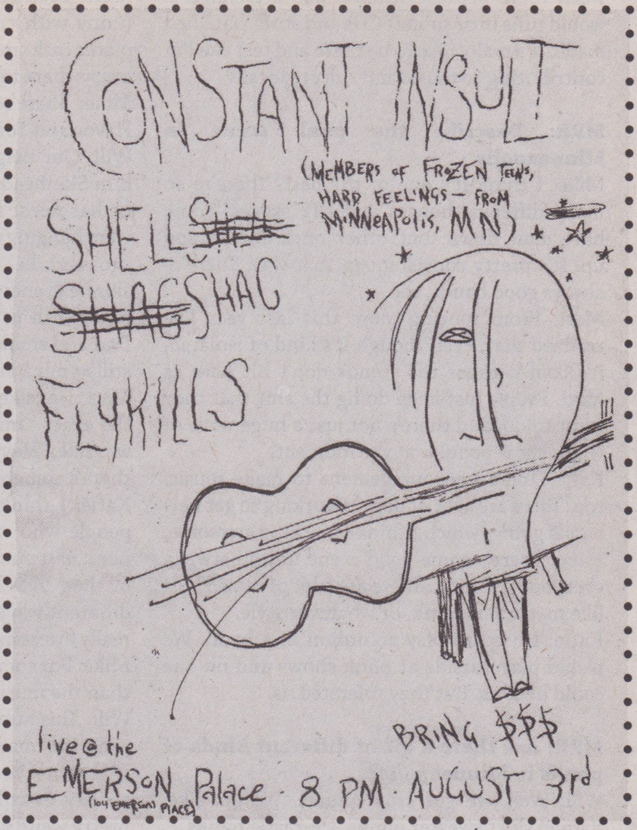
**MRR: Where did you go on that first tour?**
Mike: East Coast. Twelve days. Long drives.
Katie: Philly, New York, Pittsburgh...
Matt: That was my first time going to the East Coast, really, and all the places in between. It was awesome. We only played two shows before we left.

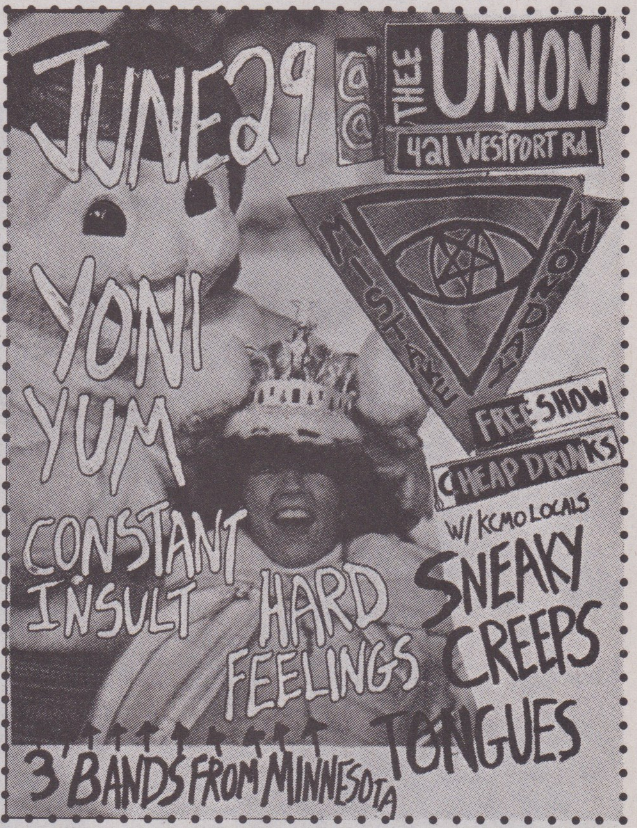
Mike: That tour was really good. It was fun because we just started practicing and as soon as we did we were like, "We should go tour in like, two months or something." We only had a couple songs partially written. We finished the demo, played two shows, and went on tour. It was kind of fun having a goal—"We have to do this shit."
Katie: It definitely whooped our asses into gear. I think we all had a lot of other things going on in our lives and other musical projects, so it was really awesome to just set a deadline and make it happen.

**MRR: Is touring an important part of being in a punk band?**
Mike: I think so. I think it's a good way to get better and become better friends. It's half of where the fun is at, hitting the road.
Katie: We all have a lot of obligations here, so I think it's hard for us to find time to go on tour. I think that going on tour is something that reenergizes me and makes me remember why punk has been an important part of my life for so long. It's a unique and amazing feeling to be pretty well taken care of across the whole country for no good reason, really.

**MRR: Will and Katie, you were both born and raised in the Twin Cities. What keeps you here after all these years?**
Will: Everywhere else sucks.
Katie: I think some other places are pretty awesome. We both left and lived other places. I went to school in Ohio for four years. Before that I lived in Missoula, Montana, and I lived in Philly when I was in school. It's hard to articulate what keeps me so interested in Minneapolis. It's really survivable with the exception of the winter, which is obviously really difficult, but it will better prepare you for most other things in life. The basic things are taken care of. It's affordable to live. There's good healthcare. That means that there's a lot of room for creativity and innovation for a lot of people within the punk scene and far beyond, too. It's inspiring to be in a place where there's a lot of possibility because it's doable here in a way that it isn't in other places.

**MRR: How did the rest of you end up here?**
Mike: I'm from northern Minnesota. I spent most of my time in Duluth. That city and the music scene are small and the more time you spend there, the smaller it gets, so I started hanging out at shows and playing with people down here some years ago. I gradually started making friends here so I decided I should, more or less, live here. There's more stuff going on, but I still go to Duluth all the time.
Matt: I grew up in small-town Arizona, which was shitty. Then I moved to Flagstaff to go to school. When school was over, I wanted to play music, but didn't really know people who were playing music. I went to grad school for like, half a semester because I didn't know what to do. Then I dropped out and thought "I gotta do something or I'm gonna waste away in Arizona." A friend of mine, Sarah Collins, had just moved here and was like, "You should just move here." Minneapolis is really cool in the sense that it feels like there's a lot going on for how big it is. It's not like, a huge city. It's not fucking driving around for 40 minutes to get everywhere and shit. You can just bike around. Like in Chicago, someone will be like, "Hey let's go to my friend's house!" and then we're driving for 45 minutes and I'm like, "What the fuck?"






**MRR: Do you live in punk houses?**

Mike: I live at the Rathole, a notoriously crusty metal house. It's a nice place to live. I live with some cool people. They still do a ton of metal and grind shows and stuff. It's been around for a long time.

Matt: Me and Will live together with two other friends, Antoine and Lulu. It's not really a punk house—people don't just show up and we don't have shows or anything. In my head, punk houses are more than just punks living together.

Will: I think all of us at our house lived at places where there were shows, and it's nice to not do that sometimes.

Katie: I just live with two friends and my sweetie in a house that is owned, which is cool. That's another thing that's cool about Minneapolis. If you want to commit in that way, it's somewhat possible.

**MRR: What do you do for money?**

Matt: Currently, for me, nothing.

Mike: I'm in a med study right now and getting a few thousand from that. I just do odd-job type of stuff.

Will: I work as a bike courier.

Katie: I work at a radio station and for a cemetery. I've had an interest in radio for a long time because it's a media source that has pretty awesome and progressive roots. It's also pretty cheap to make and really easy to consume, so I think it's really awesome. I work at a community radio station in town that's been around since the late '70s. It has a lot of really awesome music and public affairs programming. It's no single format. It's cool to

work there because when I was a teenager I would tune in or submit CDs and stuff that I had made. It's really nice to be there and feel like I'm contributing to music and culture locally.

**MRR: Describe the punk scene in Minneapolis.**

Mike: I think it's one of the best. There're so many different houses and DIY spaces. Some have shut down, but other ones always pop up. It's pretty consistent in that way. There're always good bands, too.

Matt: From touring more this last year I've realized that, even though it's kind of isolated, it's cool because the trends don't hit here as hard. People just keep doing the shit that they want to do, and there's not just a huge wave of whatever is popular at the moment.

Katie: There's encouragement to make music, too. There are a lot of people working to get new bands going, which I think is fucking awesome.

Mike: There's some good scene unity between everybody, I think. There are a lot of mixed bills like metal, pop punk, or whatever style.

Katie: I used to play accordion in a band. We would play outside at punk shows and no one could hear us. But they tolerated us.

**MRR: Are there a lot of different kinds of punks in Minneapolis?**

Will: Well, we got crust punks. We got like, flannel shirt sweater punks. Ice-castle punks.

Katie: They don't always look like punks, which is cool.

Matt: Leather jacket punks. Crust punks. It's funny with crust, because people from other places ask me, "Are there just crust punks everywhere in Minneapolis?"

Mike: There're construction punks, like Felix Havoc and Tony D.

Will: Our neighbor is a skinhead. We just call him Skinhead Dad. He'll just walk his dog and he has never said anything to us, ever. But we were hanging out on the stoop a couple months ago and he came back from some sort of skinhead show and he wanted to come over and party with us. So we hung out with Skinhead Dad and smoked weed. I think his one-hitter is still at our house.

Matt: He talked to me one other time and it was the exact same thing. He got out of a cab and was like, "Hey! Y'all partying tonight?" So yeah, there's some skinheads.

Katie: I think it's cool that there are a lot of people who would not necessarily identify as punk, but punk has still been an important part of their lives here. People just grow with it in different ways, which is cool. There are a lot of really awesome art and theater projects.

Mike: For some, it's more about the community than the music.

Will: This subculture's been around for a long time. So many people have a connection to it that it's becoming a bigger part of a wider society or culture or whatever, which can be pretty weird sometimes.

Katie: It can be weird, but it can be cool to see people take the ethos that they've learned in it and take it to other places, too.

**MRR: Do you talk to punks who you don't know on the street?**

Mike: More so in Duluth because I get excited when I see anybody. Like some stranger in a Filth shirt or something. I'll try to talk to them, and it'll turn out that they're visiting from somewhere else.

Katie: Something that people say is that they don't get the "weirdo nod" here. Like a lot of friends who moved up from Milwaukee would say, "At least in Milwaukee, no matter what kind of weirdo you are, you get a nod." That's something that I wish was more present here. I think one of the reasons that people dress punk is that it's a shortcut to being connected with the people you want to be connected with.

Will: I was buying groceries the other day and there was this woman with a Dead Moon back patch and a small, faded face tattoo. I guess I could've said hi, but I was wearing my work clothes and just looked like a bike jock, so I didn't think it would go very well, ya know?

**MRR: How do you feel when you see people filming basement shows on smartphones? Is that appropriate?**

Matt: I don't think so. I think photography is different because it's less invasive. Someone who's holding a smartphone up the entire time is way more annoying.

Katie: It doesn't encourage people to enjoy something in the moment. It encourages people

to have something that they can show other people to prove that they live a certain kind of life or something. I think it's fine for people to want to have some kind of documentation, but it takes away from people being in the moment.
Mike: I heard that Danzig beat the shit out of some guy for taking video at his show last week. The article is crazy. It said that they took the guy backstage and the bouncers held him back while Danzig just beat the fuck out of him.

**MRR: How did you hook up with this label that put out your new LP?**
Mike: Let's Pretend is a label out of Bloomington, Indiana. I had been friends with Pete from the label for a long time. I met him like, ten years ago or something. On our first tour, right after we put out that tape, Pete set up the show and he just really liked it and asked if we would try to put something out. We ended up recording shortly after tour.
Katie: Pete also gave me this Dead Moon shirt that is fucking so sick. We hadn't even met until that tour.

**MRR: How does that work? Like, how many did they press and how many do you get?**
Mike: Three hundred twelve inches and a hundred tapes. We get like, 20 percent of the copies or something. We haven't got all of the copies yet. He's really nice to deal with. I think the deal he does with records is pretty generous. With other record labels that have helped me, it's not quite 20 percent. It's more like 10 percent. He's really laid back. He's just like, "You can pay me whenever you sell whatever."
Katie: Every time he sends us records, part of them are the ones we'd pay for and part of them are the ones we'd get for free. He gives us more than what we would pay for and then we send him money for the next ones. He gives us a great deal and then he distributes them, too.

**MRR: Can you talk a little bit about what the constant insult is, exactly?**
Will: Just living in a world full of bullshit and injustice and awful everything.
Katie: I think the constant insult is a lot of life. I think there are a lot of beautiful things in life, but they're often buried under a bunch of bullshit. My life, compared to a lot of other people's lives, is pretty fucking easy, but the world sometimes is just pretty hard to deal with. It's pretty despicable. I'm trying to expand what I write songs about, because unfortunately I find it easier to think about lyrics when I'm kind of upset about something. I do get excited about things in life, but my first instinct isn't always to go try to write about them.
Will: One time I was sitting at the May Day Café. I had just got back to town from something, I wasn't working, and I was super broke and shit. There was a group of four people sitting next to me who were all young and cool looking. They looked kinda similar to people who I hang out with, but they were all talking about their Roth IRA and retirement plans and how they were making all these

smart financial decisions. I was like, "Oh my god…" I got home and turned on the radio to *Marketplace* on NPR and they were talking about these millennials, those same people, doing all this stuff, and it's just infuriating.

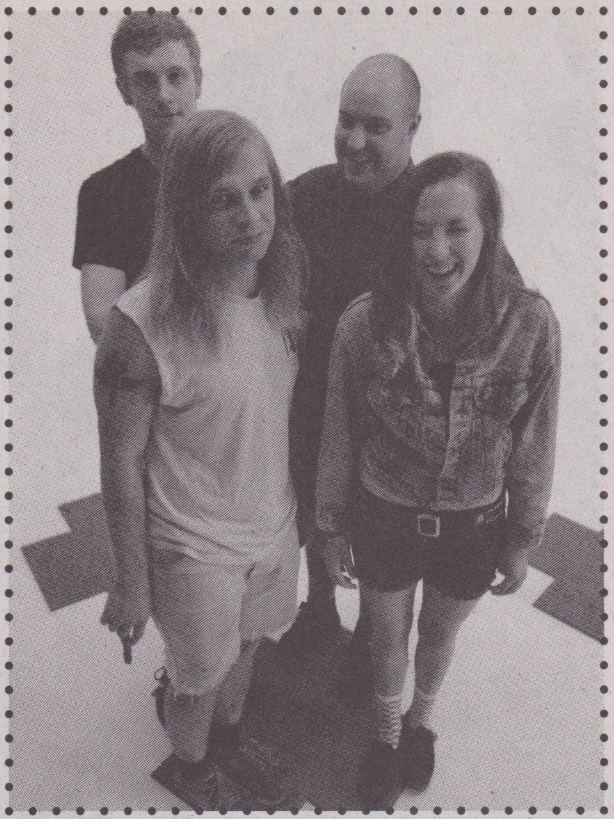
**MRR: Would you say that most of your songs are pretty negative?**
Katie: I wouldn't say they're necessarily negative. They just reflect what is on my mind. I also have chronic illness, chronic pain. So it makes doing everything that I've cared about in my life really challenging. It's given me a weird perspective on how to operate in a punk scene that really relies on your physical ability. Like I said, I'd like to try to write about some other things, but a lot of my songs reflect that kind of crossroads.
Will: A punk band can sing a song about the state or the system or society and how it's all fucked up, or recite a list of facts about US intervention somewhere, or police killings and all this stuff, but I think it's more interesting to hear a person's perspective on trying to live in a world where that's going on.

**MRR: A mix of the personal and political?**
Will: I think so. I don't know if we say anything that's explicitly political.
Katie: It's largely personal, but it's about living in a world where the political realities are really damning and damaging. I've been thinking a lot lately about the differences between having ideals to live by and trying to live idealistically in a world that's pretty fucking far from ideal. It's really challenging to try and reconcile those things. Sometimes just being able to live by your ideals in a non-ideal world is a very fortunate and privileged thing to be able to do. When you are faced with realities where you can't do that, it sucks.

**MRR: What inspires you in a positive way? What are you excited about?**
Matt: Mainly music and art, people who try really hard to do what they care about even though it's not always a practical thing. Like with bands and stuff—you're not going to make any money. You put all this time into it, but it's one of the only things that makes me feel good. When other people do that and you can just tell they worked really hard, it's really exciting.

**MRR: More specifically, is there anything happening in the world right now that you can see and be like, "Fuck yeah! *This* is what keeps me going. *This* is why I live"?**
Mike: I mostly get excited about really good or really free food. My free food critic blog is coming soon.
Will: Mike's a foodie.
Katie: There's so much awesome stuff happening with community media right now, specifically with community radio. I think there's this really large interest in people to take control of the music that is played and the art that is produced and how things are covered. Sometimes that means an obsession with social media, which has positive aspects but can be damaging. It also means that there's all this other awesome media work going on nationally that I think is sick. The FCC just licensed hundreds of new low power radio stations across the country. This allows people to get on the air at a really low cost without the risk of getting arrested. There's like four new radio stations popping up in the Twin Cities right now. There's one up in northern Minnesota in Two Harbors, and there's a bunch across the country.

**MRR: What's the most exciting thing you've seen in punk rock in the past six months?**
Will: Intrepid Hearts. They're great.
Matt: I went to that fest in Oklahoma City, Everything Is Not OK. That ruled. It was cool because there were a bunch of young kids there. There are not a lot of teenagers that come to shows in Minneapolis. People were just pumped. Everyone was super-psyched about everyone else.
Katie: Seeing young bands form, especially young bands with women, has been really fucking awesome. I also saw Uranium Club, one of Matt's other bands, for the first time just a couple of months ago, and it was so awesome. They had a swirly wheel going in the background. It was really cool. It was an intersection of music and a lot of other types of art and creativity and just general weirdness. I really appreciate when people have a space to be weird as fuck. At certain times of the day you have to be pretty straight-laced for your survival or well-being, so then to have a place to just let down and be a weirdo is really awesome.
Mike: Something I'm excited about is the new Duluth scene. I've been



watching it come and go over the past thirteen years or so. These past two years a ton of young kids are starting new bands that are really good. Almost everybody's under 21. Pizza Ghost, Brain Bugs, Tenants. Me and my buddy Dean just threw a punk fest that went really well. It's called Northern Isolation Fest. We plan on doing it every year.

**MRR: Do you ever imagine what it would be like if you became some kind of big deal major label band?**
Matt: When I see bands that I listened to in high school and they're still going and they're "successful," it just seems like a horrible life. They play in shitty venues where you have to sound check before your show and stuff. It just seems terrible.
Will: When I think about that, I wonder if that even exists anymore. Aren't record labels totally different and broken now? I don't even know how that happens. To me, it's a totally different world, those indie rock internet machines. I don't understand how they exist in the first place.

**MRR: You don't think you'd have fun with it a little bit?**
Katie: I mean, it would be sick to rock every day. Me and Mike talk about that a lot. Mike always says, "Why don't you just play guitar for a living?"
Mike: One of my favorite bands, the Goo Goo Dolls, recently lost their drummer and I fantasize about if I could just drum for them.

**MRR: What's next?**
Matt: We're writing new songs, which is exciting. It's cool to all be in town for the first time in a big chunk of time. We'll probably play shows and record eventually. We talked about maybe a 7" sometime, but we don't really know.
Mike: Maybe a tour down south. We haven't toured at all since that record came out.
Katie: It's cool to write new songs, because we've only been able to be together for a few months at a time.
Will: We've got a whole new sound.

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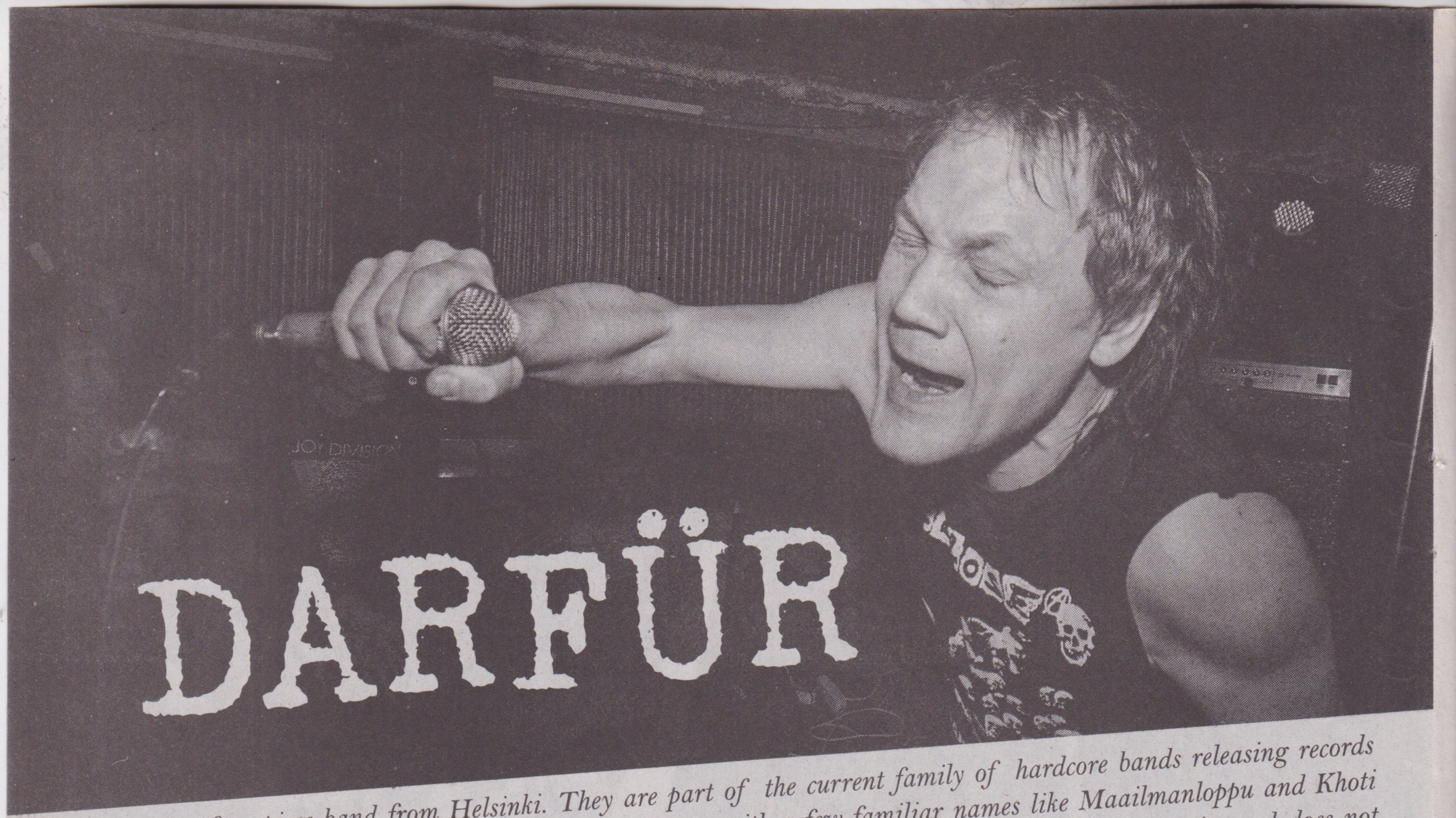


# DARFÜR

*Darfür is a four-piece band from Helsinki. They are part of the current family of hardcore bands releasing records and traveling around the Finnish landscape, making gigs with a few familiar names like Maailmanloppu and Khoti Tuhoa. With three vinyl releases already, each worth tracking down, the band continues to make noise and does not seem intent on stopping. I'm thankful to the guys for being generous with their time and answering these questions.*
*Introduction and interview by Larry Nance. Photos provided by the band.*

## AP: bass / Karsa: drums / Niko: vocals / Osku: guitar

**MRR: When did Darfür begin? Was there ever a grand plan for making this kind of music, or did it just come about naturally?**
Niko: We probably started talking about starting a band with Osku sometime during 2010 and finally managed to gather all the members and start playing late in 2011.
Me and Osku had a clear idea that hardcore punk was the way to go. After we started to make our first songs and started rehearsing, the sound gradually began to form. At the time we recorded our first demo tape we had a pretty good idea what kind of overall sound we were aiming for.
Osku: I just wanted to play fast. The sound came about pretty naturally.

**MRR: Are any of you in other bands?**
All: AP plays in a shitload of bands, e.g. Hard Action, the Pistones, Meathearts, First Times, etc. Osku plays in Acid Runs and also in First Times.

**MRR: What kind of work do you do?**
Niko: Osku is a practical nurse and works with homeless people with substance abuse and mental health issues. AP works in a guitar shop. Niko and Karsa are both research scientists/graduate students in the University of Helsinki.

**MRR: How important is it to get involved with mainstream society, like taking jobs that are often filled by more conservative types, such as being an attorney, banker, or even a cop? The sorts of positions that are in need of change?**
Niko: I think it's not the occupation per se, but the way of thinking and doing within the particular job. What I mean is that, for example, there's a huge difference if one is working as a blood sucking corporate lawyer or as an attorney interested in the rights of less fortunate people. Or between corrupted and power abusing public officer, and someone who is actually trying to change things for better within the community. Unfortunately, the latter ones are a really rare species. Of course cops and security guards make a whole other group of know-it-all assholes, which I am not even going to start with, just to keep my blood pressure at a decent level. People, please think for yourselves, and try to make the best of your time in whatever your interests are, and don't just settle for the existing dogmas or ready-made patterns.

**MRR: Are you involved with the punk scene in Helsinki, or anywhere else in Finland, such as setting up shows?**
Niko: Yes. I'd say that most of the gigs we've played in Finland have been organized by ourselves. Of course there has

been a lot of help from the local people when playing outside of Helsinki. Since none of us are originally from Helsinki, all of us have also been organizing gigs in our old hometowns. In my opinion, especially when playing this kind of music, it is much easier to gather a few friends' bands and then offer those bands to play in different cities with local bands. You know, a ready package, take or leave it. It's a complete daydream to just wait by the phone for someone to call who would like you to play here and there, although it has actually happened a few times, which is always strange, hah!

**MRR: Is there a strong connection between local punk scenes within Finland? How about other countries in Europe? Is there more of a working connection between the Finnish punk scene and Eastern Europe or with the West?**
Niko: The punk scene in Finland in general is rather tight, because it's quite small. So more or less, all the bands play in the same venues around Finland. Maybe there's a bit less interaction between the southern and northernmost parts than between, for example, Helsinki and Tampere, but that's just due to the distance. The connections to Eastern and Western Europe are roughly equally strong. People have friends on both sides of the good old Iron Curtain. Lots of Finnish bands have toured Europe since the '80s, so it's usually easy to make contacts for booking shows through friends.

**MRR: Would you compare this whole international punk movement to be more like a nation, or a collection of city-states? Is it meaningful to make connections with other punks around the world and support causes outside of your own backyard?**
Niko: I think there's lots of local variation between distinct punk scenes globally, which may then support the idea of a collection of scattered cities or scenes. On the other hand, the working connections between cities and countries are usually great, and people are open and friendly wherever you go. In my opinion, this is highly important both globally and on a national level. It is really interesting and invigorating to either read or have a first-hand experience of things happening with other punk scenes across the globe, whether it's a similar kind of problem, e.g. the tearing down of squats or social centers, or if it is something really great, like finally getting a new, long awaited venue. One should always try to look a bit further than just one's own scene and make connections and new friends around the world. You know, to see how other people do the same things slightly differently and thereby maybe get some new ideas and underpin the DIY concept. "If they can do it, why couldn't we?"

**MRR: Are there reliable venues in most cities in Finland?**
Niko: No. In larger cities, there are few fairly good and reliable venues, Vastavirta in Tampere being absolutely the best. Lepakkomies in Helsinki is the place where most of the punk shows are organized. However, it can be really frustrating. People organize sold out shows again and again, which of course bring in pretty good money for the owners. But what do we get in return? A fucking slap in the face! For example, the men's toilet has been broken for at least six months now, although there has been quite a bit of pressure that they please fix it. In Helsinki, Oranssi is a really good venue, and there are also a few other not so great but still OK places for gigs. In Turku, TVO has finally re-opened, which is great! Additionally, there are pretty good venues such as Aurinkotehdas and Rekisteri. Just to mention a few others: Ykän Pub in Oulu, Ilokivi in Jyväskylä, and in Kouvola there was a really nice place called Rytmi-Katti, but unfortunately it closed a while ago. Hopefully they will get a new decent venue in Kouvola soon. In general, smaller cities don't usually have bars or venues specialized just in organizing punk/underground shows. There are just bars where all the bands who come to play in that particular city play. Hence, this is one of the main reasons why it might be difficult to organize shows in these kinds of cities.

**MRR: I'm always complaining about the lack of all-ages venues, but I never pretend to have an answer. Often there just seems to be no place to make a show happen. Is this a problem in Finland? Do you think it is an important issue?**
Niko: I think this is a very important issue, and I am pretty sure that all of us agree. I cannot surely say what is the current situation on this issue in other cities of Finland, but at least in Helsinki it has been a problem for quite a while now. However, I'm really glad to say that there has been an improvement in this field within the last few years. Besides Rauhanasema, where all-ages shows have been organized for by AKL for the last two decades—which are always completely packed, regardless which bands are playing!—there's now a re-opened venue called Oranssi.

The Union of Conscientious Objectors, AKL, is a youth organization for peace, founded in 1974. Since Oranssi re-opened in the fall of 2014—originally registered in the beginning of 1990—there have been a lot of different kinds of

events, such as gigs, courses, art, and theatre related action. Importantly, the new Oranssi venue is just one of the things that Oranssi does. Other things are renovating, repairing, and maintaining old houses as reasonably priced rental apartments for young people. From the other cities of Finland, I have to mention Kulttuuritallit in Kouvola, Aurinkotehdas and Rekisteri in Turku, Keltainen Talo in Tampere ,and Gallery Hoi Sie in Lappeenranta. Of course there are all-ages shows organized in squats too, but unfortunately the really short lifespan of most of the squats in Finland is a sad fact.

**MRR: Give me a short list of great Finnish record stores.**
Niko: For great record shops, the list will be very short: Combat Rock Shop in Helsinki. There are a few other decent ones also in Helsinki, e.g. Keltainen Jäänsärkijä and Green Grass Records. The number of record stores here in Finland has decreased quite a bit lately. I think this might be a more or less global phenomenon, and I'm not that aware of the state of good record shops in cities other than Helsinki. Support your local record dealers!

**MRR: What's a good example of DIY culture now in Finland.**
Niko: From the more recent ones, the new photo book by Jussi Jänis, *Reach Out–Photos from the Helsinki Punk/HC Underground 2008–2012*, was completely done without any major book publishers and was put out by a bunch of small record labels. Jussi did a great job with this book! Additionally, the amount of various fanzines has clearly increased within the last few years, which I think is great.

**MRR: Are punk soup kitchens happening there? Who organizes them and how are they maintained?**
Niko: Besides Food Not Bombs! events, the soup kitchen culture is not that strong in Finland, or at least not in Helsinki. Fortunately, Osuuskunta 82 has stepped up in this field of action and has been organizing soup kitchens roughly once a month in Kupoli, Helsinki, where they sell really tasty vegan food for a couple of euros.

**MRR: What is Osuuskunta 82 and how does it work?**
Niko: Here's a description directly quoted from their webpage:

> *After losing independent gig and gathering places like Vuoritalo and Factory we have had to settle for compromises every time organizing gigs here in Helsinki. Because the punk scene in Helsinki is quite big and there are many active people involved it's ridiculous that we don't have a place of our own which would work on our terms but instead we are giving our money to others' bars. Being tired of the situation ten punks decided to do something about it. They have all been involved in punk scene for many years and as they joined their energy together, Osuuskunta 82 was born (Osuuskunta = cooperative). Our goal is to find a place where we could organize gigs, have a bar and during the daytime, a vegan cafe. Right now, when we yet don't have our own place we are organizing gigs (in Tampere and in Helsinki) from which all the money we get goes to support the cooperative. When the right place is found we will need all the help with renovation and fixing the place so if you think you could help us don't hesitate to contact us!*

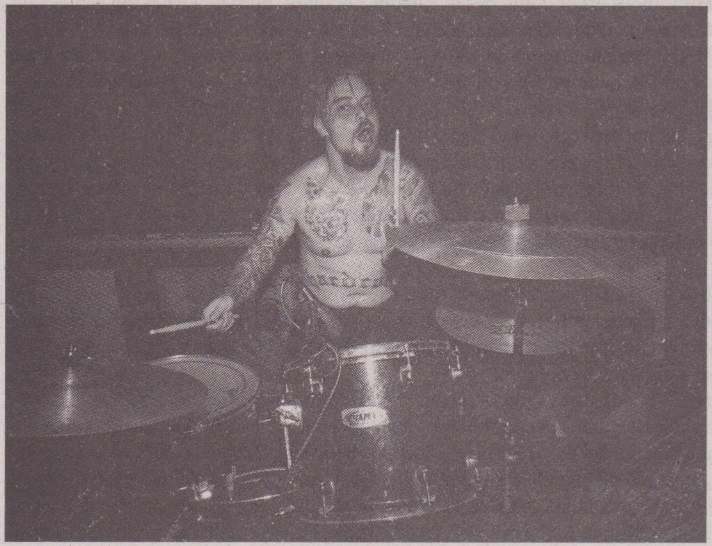
In my opinion, this is exactly the kind of DIY action that is greatly needed, not only in Helsinki, but in every fucking existing punk scene there is! Although the progress of these kinds of projects is usually slow (which is exactly the case in this particular "quest"), and could also be pretty frustrating every once in a while, I really do hope that Osuuskunta 82 will maintain their enthusiasm and stay patient on finding their own venue to organize shows in. *DIY or die*!

**MRR: Who are your favorite Finnish bands?**
Osku: Perikato, Useless Cunts, Diskelmä, the Splits, Lapinpolthajat.
Karsa: Nervous System and Kaaos.
Niko: It's probably easier if I just mention a few old all-time favorites like Kaaos, Lama, and Varaus, and then shortly list a few bands that I have been listening to lately: Kylmä Sota, Maailmanloppu, Kohti Tuhoa, Hero Dishonest, Kieltolaki, Käpykaarti, and Ydinaseeton Pohjola.

**MRR: Favorite non-Finnish bands?**
Osku: Paranoid, Damaged Head and DiE.
Karsa: Jerry's Kids and Death Side.
Niko: Older bands that I listen to constantly include Discharge, Anti-Cimex, Disclose, Cress and Framtid, just to mention a few. From the more recent bands, and also the bands I've been listening to lately: Nomad, Infernöh, Paranoid, Krömosom, Warcry, and Crucifix.

**MRR: Favorite music that is not punk?**
Osku: You should check out a Finnish band called Ghost World.
Karsa: Psych, hard rock, garage stuff, etc.
AP: I only listen to CCR, KISS and old Alice Cooper Band.

*darfurhc@gmail.com*



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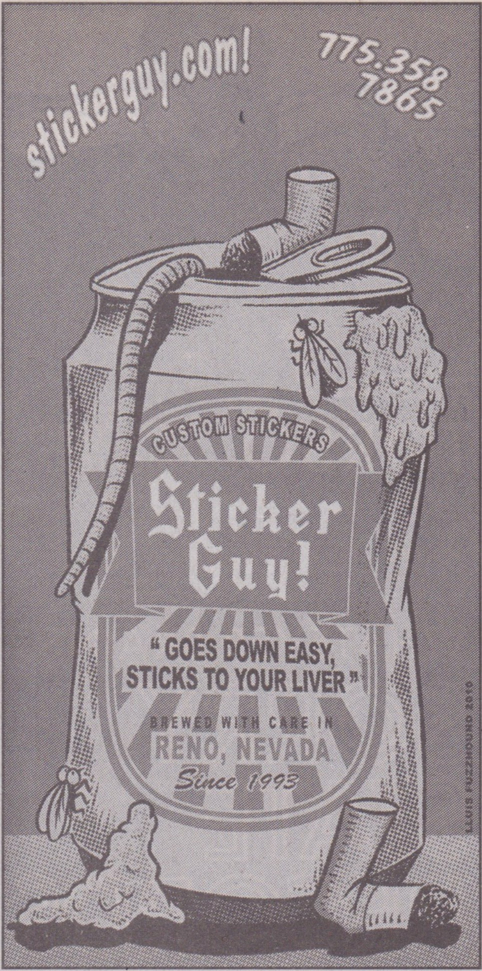

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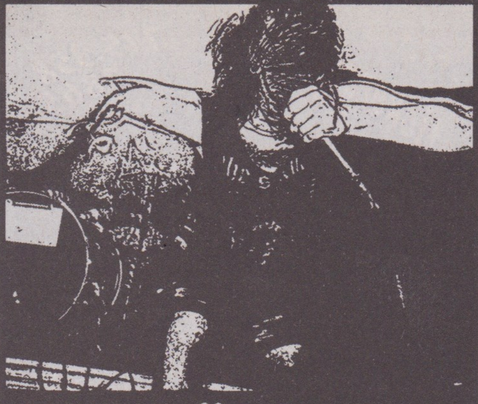

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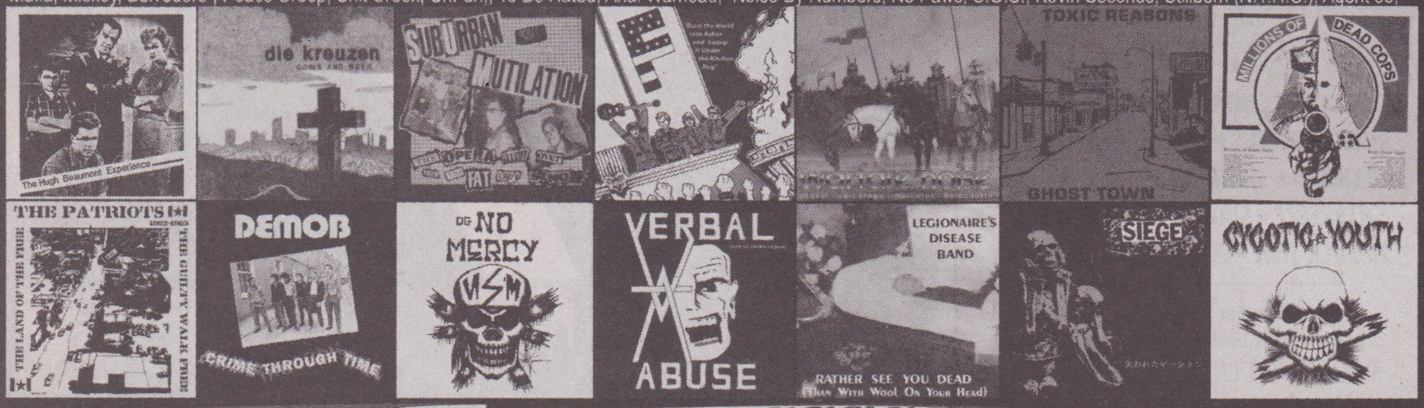


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# utah jazz

*I tell a story in my head whenever I listen to the Utah Jazz LP Ivory Wave. An adolescent boy in Anytown, USA, takes the two hits of acid he finds in his stepdad's sock drawer before sitting down for a morning of mind-rotting animated television. He's angry, and he doesn't know why. His brain fills with previously unimagined colors as his mouth becomes stained from the crayons he compulsively eats. Mental instability with rotten teeth from too much sugar.*

*Guitarist and #1 vocalist Melody Seymour is this scabby little boy. Second guitarist and #2 vocalist Brandon Gaffney and drummer Britt Wagner are the kids with lice who live down the street and come over to shoot at stray cats with pellet guns.*

*Utah Jazz provides the soundtrack to a drug-addled child's psych-punk bad trip, and they've graciously agreed to sit down for an interview in hopes of promoting their debut full-length. Conducted in an undisclosed location in sunny Buffalo, NY.*

*Interview and introduction by Ian Wardynski.*
*Photos provided by the band.*

**MRR: Some say the sound of the Utah Jazz and affiliated acts like Brown Sugar and Mayday have helped create the dominant sound in Buffalo over the past few years. What was the atmosphere in the city before those bands existed, and how do you think you fit in now that the surrounding bands have kind of petered out?**

Britt: I feel like, when we started, Buffalo was in its heaviest stage—a lot of grind bands, a lot of brutal punker bands.

Brandon: Yeah, heavy. Brutal. Brutality….

Britt: It was shows at the Funeral Home, and that's where we practiced while they had metal shows and super-grind shows. And we just played retard rock'n'roll. You could say we were heavily influenced by grind, metalcore, and Miller Highlife…in bottles.

Mel: But now, I feel like everything is real soft. It's a little too happy now. I think we started pushing people to have fun back then, but now we've gotta get angry again, while still having fun. It's like we didn't fit in when we started, and now we don't fit in again.

Brandon: We're doing a D-beat band now called Collision.

Britt: No, it's called Dis-odor, and we wear Tom's deodorant because it doesn't work.

**MRR: Do you feel that your sound is indicative of the Western NY scene? Like, do you fit in with a certain sound or scene in the region, or are you musically an island unto yourself?**

Britt: We are our own country. I feel like people travel to our island to see us.

Melody: We're floating on our island in the space-time continuum. Buy our record.

Brandon: Wait, we should try to answer this.

**MRR: …because I always thought that most of the Western NY bands fit together in some respect. Buffalo and Rochester bands like Plates and Brown Sugar all kinda**

**sounded like they fit in with Flip Shit and the other Rotcore bands—a more garage rock'n'roll infused hardcore sound.**

Melody: Buffalo used to have such a huge garage scene. Not so much anymore.

Britt: It's just in the water.

Brandon: None of the other New York State cities have a rivalry like Buffalo and Rochester. The cities hate each other, right?

Melody: Not as much as they used to. People are getting older and becoming more complacent in both scenes, which sucks, but at least people don't hate each other anymore. When Buffalo was a super grindy city and Rochester was always like Rotcore.

**MRR: They would call you "Tuffalo," but it doesn't seem very tough now.**

Melody: Nope! The tough guys had kids, and they're not tough anymore. I've never been tough. Britt's never been tough. Brandon's never been tough.

**MRR: I saw Brandon punch a bouncer once, which was kinda tough. He kinda missed, I think, but he at least swung at him.**

Brandon: Oh no, I got him! I followed through with it, but he was huge. Yeah, what am I gonna do?

Britt: I don't really want to compare, but I don't think there are many bands that followed anything we've ever done. Not that it's impossible. I think everyone's just doing their own thing at this point.

Brandon: I think when we started, we thought all the bands were such a bummer here in Buffalo—so much darkness. We were like, "Let's just have a fun little rock'n'roll band."

**MRR: Now everyone's having a beach party.**

Britt: The scene had a solid sound for a while, but now everyone's just doing their own thing, which I think is great.

Melody: I don't think there's a uniform sound or uniform scene in Buffalo anymore.

Brandon: I think things have spread out so much, which is good for me. I hate going to the same fuckin' show every week.

Melody: I like beer.

**MRR: In what ways has your relationship evolved being in a band for five years? Nowadays that's like two lifetimes for a band?**

Britt: Our band's fucked up when you think about it.

Melody: We're all milk brothers. Well, Britt and I were playing together since we were fourteen or fifteen. So when Brandon and I started a band, I suggested that Britt join, and we just played together naturally.

**MRR: You two are from North Tonawanda?**

Britt: Yeah, we went to middle school and high school together. Melody gave me my first Mohawk. That's pretty punk!

Melody: And I taught Britt her first guitar riff over the phone. "I can't sleep. Teach me Nirvana." That's when the magic began. Then we met Brandon at shows and started the band maybe six years ago.

Brandon: Yeah, in 2009. That's when I lived at the Funeral Home. It was April of that year, because I had just broken my collarbone after our second practice, remember?

Melody: Yeah, we used to crush your Vicodin and snort 'em. But yeah, how have we evolved? Right now, we're going into this crazy psychedelic trance together of love and hate, and I feel that's the way our music is going, too. Our music is speaking true to our relationships with each other. It's getting stronger and heavier. It's getting spookier. We're getting into the core, the magma.

**MRR: On the topic of Vicodins and beers, Buffalo is a hard drinkin' and druggin' city. Our bars are open 'til 4:00 AM to accommodate our tastes. Can you speak on drug use and abuse within the band? Is the psychedelic sound a front, or are you the real deal?**

Melody: What do you think?

**MRR: The first time I saw you guys was in Rochester, and you were fucked up on I don't even know what.**

Brandon: Yeah, Mel, you were in that pink wig. We were drinking gin in martini glasses garnished with Loratabs. We called them our "vitamins." You shit your pants, Melody!

Melody: Yeah, I shit my pants the next morning. Don't write that! Well, I don't really care. I have no shame. But to answer your question, fuck yeah, we're the real deal. But I don't think we're as crazy now as we were back then.

Brandon: I can't do that stuff like I used to. Oh my God.

Melody: We were just like, "Let's have fun and ruin ourselves and ruin everyone's night."

Brandon: We did pills every single day that first summer we met. I don't even remember that summer. Now I'm like Lemmy. I prefer uppers and downers, not so much the in-betweens.

Melody: I like psychedelics maybe once a week. Oh, it's the best.

Britt: I feel like I've seen too much to do that now. I can't figure out my feelings

now, let alone with acid. Did we even answer that question?

**MRR: Yeah, perfectly! Have you found it hard to hit the ground running, so to speak? You've been a band for over five years and just now did your first extended tour. Is this the Buffalo curse? Is it important to hit the road from here on out, or have you decided to not give a shit, given your advanced punk years?**

Melody: I'm going to quit the band next week, I think. I think the Utah Jazz doesn't really exist on the time continuum that most bands do. I think we take our time because time doesn't exist. What we make exists, and we'll take our time doing it. But I think we should tour more.

Britt: I think the reason we never toured much was because Brandon was busy with Brown Sugar, and Melody did Mayday. We were kind of an afterthought.

Melody: And none of us had our own vehicles. We were the irresponsible members of our other bands.

Brandon: Then we got together and thought that would be a good idea. Yeah, we're also the band with no resources.

Mel: I think the plan is to tour again when we get to it, but there's no real rush. I feel like we can do this forever.

Brandon: I think about the punk world where bands get popular and tour all the time, and I don't envy any of those bands, because I don't think that's as real as some of the shit we do, right? It's just all wallpaper.

Melody: It's in one ear and out the other. If we have a legacy, it will be real, because it took a lot of effort and struggle. That means more than just getting hyped and dying off.

Brandon: …and contributing nothing to the dialogue of music.

Britt: I'd rather take the time on these songs and be better than we were six years ago instead of putting out music that isn't getting progressively better.

Melody: I just want to get better, and if it takes time, so be it.

Brandon: We're going to be a band for, like, twenty years.

Melody: Or until one of us dies, which will probably be me first.

> "I think the Utah Jazz doesn't really exist on the time continuum that most bands do. I think we take our time because time doesn't exist. What we make exists, and we'll take our time doing it."

**MRR: What was the process of writing the LP like? Long, obviously, but did you have a predetermined idea of what you wanted it to sound like since it was your first *big* record? Was there a particular message or vision, or did you throw you've been doing over the past few years into blender and hit purée?**

Britt: It was a mix of old and new.

Brandon: The song "Girlhitter" was written, like, six and a half years ago…like, a hundred years ago.

Melody: I don't think there was one solid vision for that record, which is kind of apparent when you listen, but I don't think that's a bad thing. We were just trying to put what we had done over the past five years into people's hands. I think the next record, as long as it doesn't take fifteen years, should be more of a concise vision.

Britt: We definitely have enough material to record and release another record.

**MRR: What kind of influences did you have upon setting out? It sounds like people making circus music with a shitty twelve-year-old boy singing.**

Melody: We're the people's band.

**MRR: But you don't have a solid influence, like, "We want to sound like this band or this era of this scene."**

Brandon: I don't think music has ever been an influence for us, unless we're all driving around listening to something, and we're like, "I love this guitar solo."

Melody: Except the one song where we wanted to sound like ZZ Top. Other than that, I don't think there is any music in the world that influences us directly. It's just our interactions together making this music. Our brains are buzzing together if we're "on" while making music.

Brandon: And when we are, we're like the best band ever. Buy our fuckin' record, please.

**MRR: What are some of the most memorable moments in Utah Jazz history?**

Brandon: They're the ones we remember the least, which is the unfortunate part.

Mel: You've been at our two best shows! That show we were talking about earlier. That was a shit show.

Brandon: That's the point of live punk shows, though—seeing into a spooky little world. You take too many vitamins, you fall down, and you shit your pants.

Melody: The other one was Western Mass. [*Editor's note: An evening that ended in an alcohol-fueled yelling match between band and audience on the importance, or lack thereof, of current feminist practices within the punk scene*].

Britt: That was a nightmare. [*laughter*] That was my nightmare.

Melody: That was the best set we ever played, though!

Britt: I don't know. I feel like everyone has become way too sensitive. Everyone's too easily offended. Either way, you're wrong.

Brandon: People sound like wimps, real wimps.

Melody: I just don't see me and Britt as women.

**MRR: The way I saw it was since you guys were invited into a scene because you're women, they expected you to see the world in the same way. But you're really from a scene that's unaffected by modern ideas of feminism in punk. You've been generally accepted in your city for years, and there haven't been many hurdles for you.**

Brandon: You've been celebrated because you're good musicians.

Melody: That's offensive to me. You can't just pick up a guitar

and parade yourself as a musician. We've worked really hard to know how to play. We didn't just pick up a guitar…

Britt: You can't say things like that, though, because it can change someone's whole life. Who cares if they don't know how to play it or not? What I want to say, mostly, is you shouldn't blame your gender on your inability to play.

**MRR: But I think that's the unique thing. You've been involved in the scene, playing in bands, and booking shows since you were fifteen, and the fact that you're women has never been an issue.**

Melody: We're really lucky that it's never been an issue. Britt and I kinda created our own scene. We didn't really fit in with the scene in Buffalo. We created our own thing in North Tonawanda, moved to the city, and were graciously accepted—not because we were women, but because we were active. There are scenes that are boys clubs, and that fuckin' sucks, too, but it's nice to live in a place where we're accepted regardless of our gender.

Brandon: Yeah, whenever this comes up, I'm just like, "Didn't even notice they were girls. I just like them as musicians. Sorry."

**MRR: Are there any other bands you think are worthwhile in your city, or even bands you've encountered in your travels? Shout-outs time.**

Britt: G.L.O.S.S. It was cool to play with them. It was really cool seeing people react to that band the way they did, and they were tight.

Melody: I really like the Brain from Toronto and Wet Brain from Cleveland.

Melody: For sure. Shout out to my homies in Junk Drawer.

Britt: I like really crappy power metal—guitar solos and piano organs. And then Brandon comes over and plays music that makes me wanna cry.

Brandon: I like Leonard Cohen. I only listen to sad music.

Melody: I listen to a lot of hip-hop.

Brandon: Drake sucks.

Melody: What about punk bands? I really like Smear. I like Gag.

Brandon: Yeah, what punk bands do I like? Brown Sugar was sick. Tapehead is sick.

Melody: Healer and Gas Chamber are my two faves in Buffalo.

Britt: And Jess Marvin's band, Wrux. Slowly but surely, everything here is reverting to our brutal past.

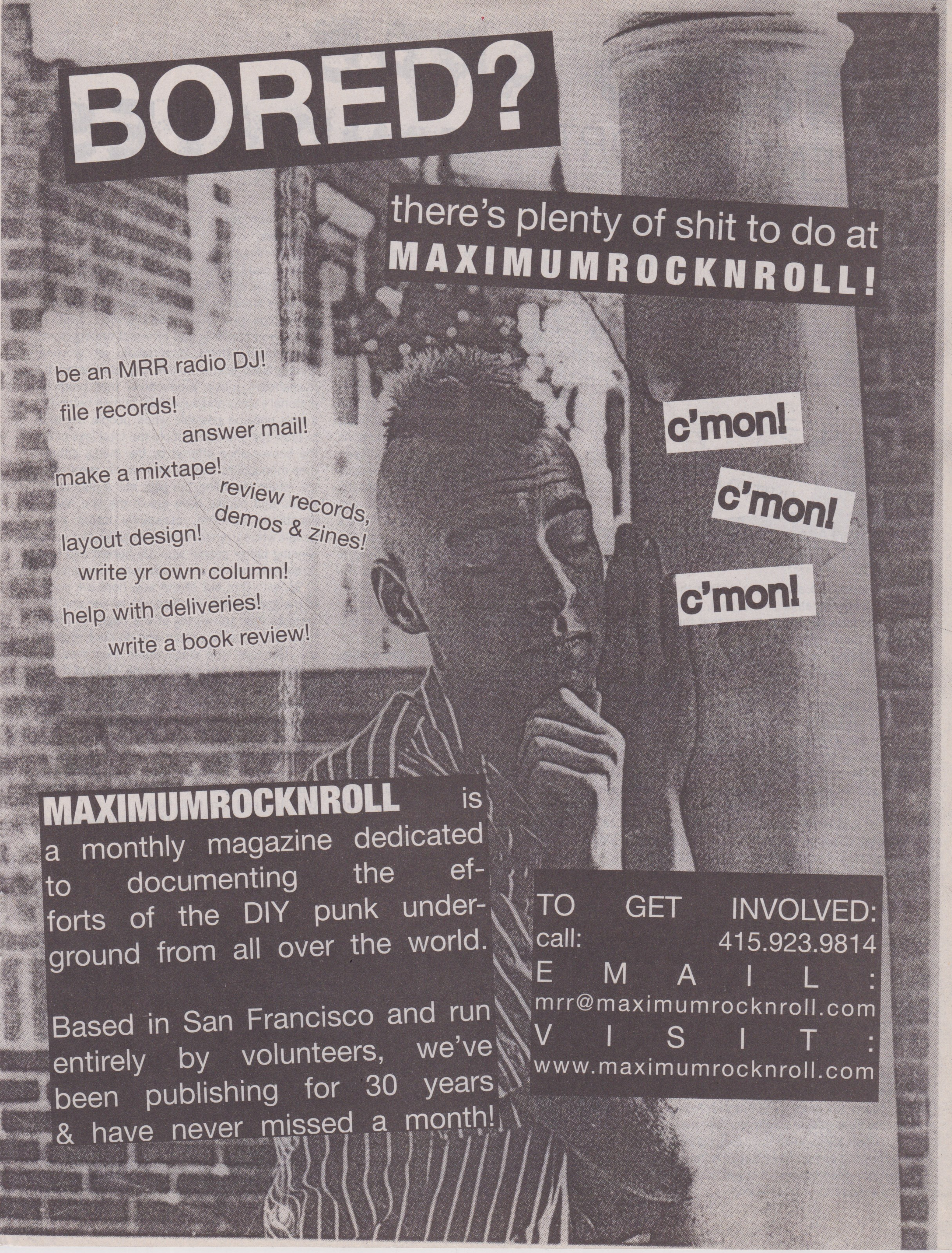
> "That's the point of live punk shows… seeing into a spooky little world. You take too many vitamins, you fall down…"

**MRR: Any final words of wisdom you'd like to impart on the readers of this ink-stained toilet paper?**

Melody: Don't waste your time in college, and buy our record. Duh.

Britt: Don't stand on the bridge and watch yourself go by. Keep on rocking in the free world. Hail Sithis. Buy our record.

***The debut Utah Jazz LP, Ivory Wave, is available through the Black Dots Media Group, Media Shlitz LLC, and fine online and IRL distros nationwide.***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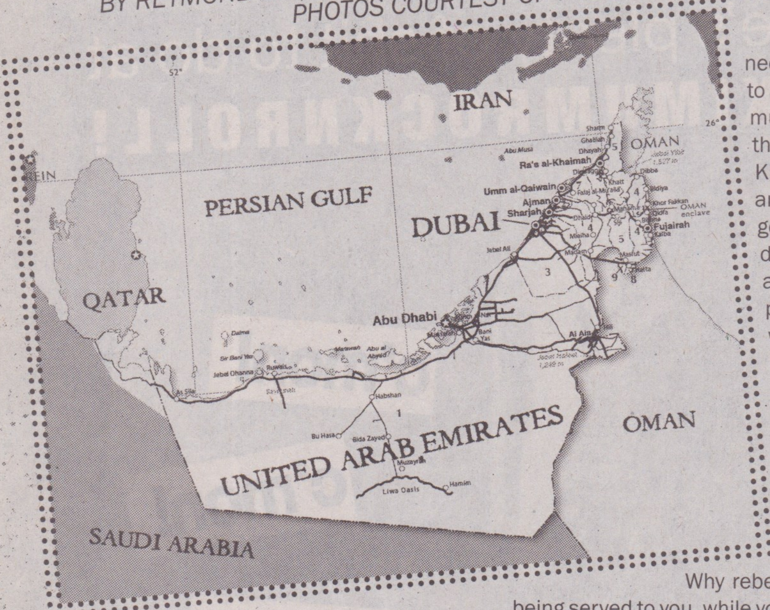
# UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

## SCENE REPORT

BY REYMOND BRAVO
PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE BANDS.




Here we go, a scene report from the sunny United Arab Emirates. In the past, it would've been accurate for people to say that there was been no punk / hardcore / underground scene here in Dubai after GHP disbanded and the dude who ran Abbreviated Records moved out of the city. For some reason no one continued the good shit they started, and instead they fell back to the apathy of mainstream bar scenes. I guess the guy from Abbreviated was the only one honestly doing what he loved back then, and most of the people around him ended up just in it for fashion. Where the fuck are all those kids? In the clubs? Fuck the lotta yous!

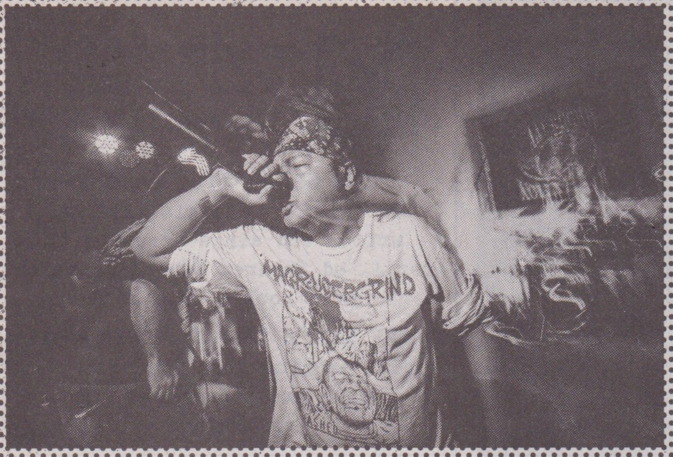
There is a music scene in the UAE, but it's the total opposite of what we can consider underground. The mainstream music scene is a culture that reinforces values and standards that are purely material and superficial. It's capitalist media friendly, and there's nothing revolutionary or creative about it. Boring, actually...maybe that's why most punks just turn to playing video games instead of going to fake "scene" gigs where they end up more miserable than they are alone. I call it a fake scene because people in the mainstream rock bands always refer to their bullshit music circles as a "scene," even though there's nothing legitimate about it. People in it have a commercial point of view and are just in it for popularity, no different from, let's say, *American Idol*, except they play loud music. Europeans still don't hang out with Asians, rich yuppies treat people who make less money like shit, people try to make their social groups cool, and they shit on people who are a hundred times nicer than their bullshit in-crowd. It's more of a crime scene than a punk scene.

There is really no need for people here to be into underground music unless they treat the music as a novelty. Kids who grew up here are pampered with the good life and are not directly affected by any social issues that plague most places where people get fed up and get involved in counterculture. As an expat, I don't see any youth defiance here, and maybe the reason for that is because there's nothing to rebel for. Why rebel when everything is being served to you, while you're plugged into the TV and playing *Grand Theft Auto* all day and totally conditioned to be a fucking brat? But then again, there is a struggle. The kids who aren't stupid are isolated in the superficial and material pop culture that dominates the youth culture here. There is hardship here, too, mostly experienced by people from third world countries. Workers who earn their wages here, trying to make ends meet with the high cost of living, send 90% of their wages to wherever third world country they came from. They are the people in the front-end services, the people working the construction sites, the people serving the expensive dinners at the restaurants only white expats and locals can afford. It's the Asian and African expats working the labor camps and the retail outlets. It's people who have moved far away from their families and countries, sent to work abroad by economics and because their government is a dumbass. So, still, there is a struggle. A struggle to make ends meet, the struggle to preserve sanity from the pressure of work and loneliness.

An underground scene does exist. In 2015, we saw real DIY events put on and attended by real people of different cultures. They vented out their stress and, in the process, made new friendships and experienced a new level of energy you can only find in a real underground environment. There is a small yet growing underground scene in this city dominated by mainstream music productions that promote material excess and superficial human behavior. It only became possible when people decided to draw the line and gamble the total loss of all the convenience offered by the media groups that monopolize events and music resources, like studio recording, bar gigs, etc. A number of bands and people have drawn the line. We're constantly attacked, constantly losing good people who surrender to peer pressure, but we're winning better people who are honest and who do support the idea of a global punk underground.

So, with that out of the way, here are some of the good people involved with bands and DIY projects that are worthy of the pages of *MRR*. Let's just focus on people who do punk rock on the right level in a place where their lives are endangered just by making punk. Most of these bands are featured in a DIY compilation called *United Assault* released by Dubai based Criminal Records in the middle of December, 2015. By the time you read this, it will have international distribution. I'll start with bands who were involved in that cooperative compilation and move on to people who sold out. Then we'll go to their flats and burn their SUVs.

First off is SOCIEDAD DESHUMANIZADA, a noisecore band with members from the Philippines and Morocco. Their songs are an explosive mixture of grind and noise, and their message addresses all the social shits attacking the underground and the social and political issues that we are faced with today. Their



Facebook page doesn't say much about them, but if you contact them, they'd be more than willing to talk with you. They're lovable guys—they'd probably send you genie shoes, too, if they like your mail. SOCIEDAD DESHUMANIZADA is also one of the best bands to see live. Don't take my word for it—see them on YouTube and break everything in your house! Every time they play, it breaks the race barrier and people go insane. Their guitarist, Erickson, also sells DIY stuff at gigs and ran a local metal production called AARRGGHH Collective which successfully brought DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION (France) and CORBATA (Japan) to tour the UAE last October. The AARRGGHH Collective is basically a group run by people involved in the crust and grindcore scenes in the Philippines who met here and started making underground and benefit projects happen. Really good people making things happen—that's why mainstream parasites prey on them. They also helped us on the launch gig of the compilation last November, so all our gratitude to these people and all the carrot cakes we can afford!

We saw a lot of crust and grind bands come up this year. The best mention would be for anarcho-D-beat crusties MANHUNT. It's a four-piece band made up of four Filipino expats. One of them used to be in the local crust band VEX, a band that sings songs dealing with theoretical political matters and sensitive social issues. MANHUNT's music reminds me sometimes of '90s D-beat bands and sometimes even FINAL WARNING (NY). MANHUNT contributed two songs to the compilation, but the factory fucked up and only included one song. If you have time, contact them, and get their full EP, which I'm told will be out in early 2016. Just get it. It will change your life! They're even better live. These people just explode like a ton of TNT when they start bangin'.

PROJECT SKULL FUCK is also one of the best powerviolence bands we've seen here, fronted by ex-NUCLEAR PUNISHMENT vocalist Coni. Their music is heavy, with songs about how overseas contract workers here are being fucked on a daily basis and how the underground struggles to protect itself from media exploitation, about being a micro scene being aggressively attacked by yuppie Filipinos (*kabayans*) to the point of disintegration. PROJECT SKULL FUCK is total insane powerviolence. They're working on an EP for 2016, and we can't wait to get our greasy paws on it and to see how much it'll terrorize the yuppie hypocrites.

Speaking of unspeakable terror, this brings us to the band everyone hates: iCEASE. iCEASE is a hardcore band, probably the only hardcore band here right now. These people are hardliners and they mean street justice. They do what they want and enjoy pissing people off with their fucked up brand of trashy hardcore music and smarter than Gandalf lyrics. Most of these guys are from the south side hardcore scene in the Philippines, the same scene that spawned no-bullshit, street level HC bands like PILEDRIVER, BIOFEEDBACK, and ISVARAH. iCEASE sound nothing like those bands, though. Their sound is fast and catchy—like if you cryogenically froze MDC in the '80s and revived them in the UAE in 2015. They sing songs about backstabbing yuppie hypocrites, the race-based wage system, and how your life sucks if the only food you can afford to eat is noodles. Cup-O-Noodles everyday, coz nobody gives a fuck about you. I think they're planning to record an EP that is set for early 2016, so that's more shit to look out for.

DEVASTATORY is a black metal band made of three sinister dudes, and they are evil. They are so evil that if I speak about them more this zine will burst into flames.

CYNTHIA LUSTER is still around after a couple of years, still dishing out powerviolence. We haven't heard anything released from these guys for a long time, but they're still around, and hopefully we'd see more shit come out of this group next year. The guys in this band are involved with AARRGGHH collective, so I guess they have a lot of other shit going on besides the band. They have two tracks on the *United Assault* compilation as well, and they're in the second issue of the UAE zine *Wrong Choice of Words*, so do check these gents out.

2016 shows promise since new bands are comin' up in the last quarter of 2015. The melodic punk band FREAKS&KINGS (really young dudes from South Africa) are now practicing. They just played at a benefit gig, and I heard they brought the roof down. Ex-members of GRAND HOTEL PARADOX are now playing in DEAD SHAKES, and they've just put out a nice EP. There's a new punk band from Sharjah called TIGHT-ASS, and they're great, too. Everything is looking up.

Well, there you go. I know my grammar sucks, coz English isn't my first language, but I just gotta do this coz no one else gives a fuck to do it, and a lot of scene fuckers here don't want me to do it. The Dubai music scene sucks, but I'm just glad there's a punk underground here to go to, one that people involved in the underground worldwide can get in touch with. I'll be honest, it's smaller than most scenes, but it's here, and it's happening.

*For more information, contact our zines* Criminal Records *and* Wrong Choice of Words *c/o R. Bravo PO Box 1155, Dubai UAE, or rmbforme@outlook.com.*

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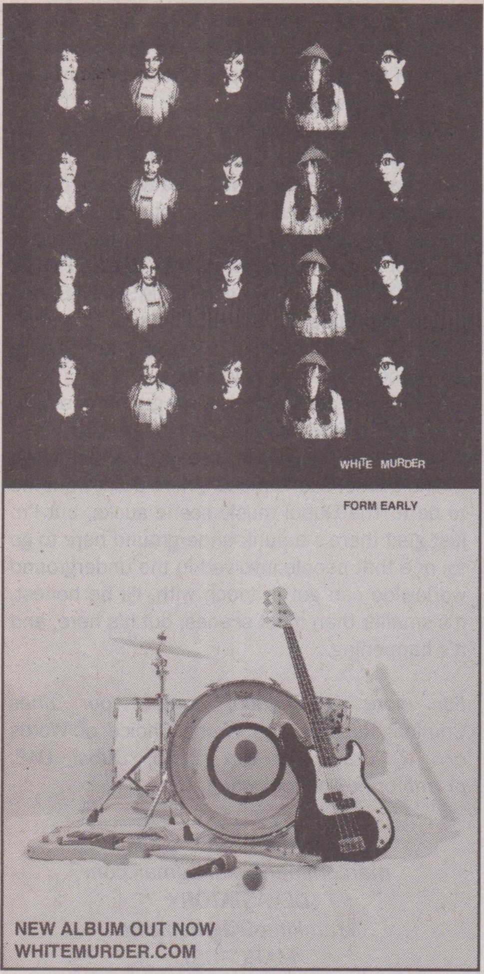

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**328 pages | $17.95**

Should you buy a medium size pizza or a document of outsider art like this book? For many years I would not think twice of transferring the money I had for food to secure a demo tape, or record, or zine that would cross my path while at an underground show.

The story here follows Allan, someone who holds little romantic currency for the material highs of things that are made by the punks. He's not collecting fliers or booking shows. He stumbles into adulthood just as the first wave of punk hits in 1977. The salad days have short pause as he and his wife Tommie move into their first adult homes. A community of beautiful losers keeps them company as the burgeoning social movement emboldens them to resist becoming the walking dead. The next three years unwind as Allan, and whatever friends of the moment, approach each turn of the road looking for a cheap high.

The story's backdrop would interest those fascinated by the arrival of punk in Los Angeles. There are scenes that take place at the Canterbury Inn, the Masque, the Whiskey....as well as dive bars, fetid apartments and numerous nasty-ass moments populated with shoplifters, prostitutes and drug dealers. There are car trips to score smack in faraway rotting suburbs, walks down Sunset Strip after hours, an invasion into a "hip" record company, and a David Bowie concert that seemed like it was a freaks' pageant. Glam, hard rock and disco take up much space at the party here. The Sunset Strip is a returning character of sorts. Remember, this was before most of America got a plastic face-lift. Sleaze and poverty seep from most points of the story. Your hands will be unsuitable for polite company.

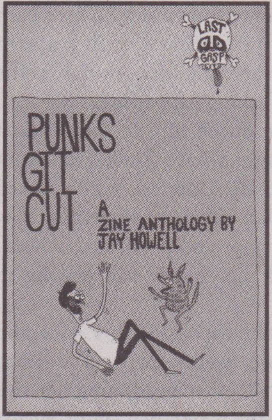
Characters familiar to LA punk history are given more depth. Members of the Go-Gos float throughout the story, Claude Debussy sneers, Black Randy exudes havoc, Truddie Plunger appears, and Darby Crash... disappears. All of them speak and vomit and laugh and cause trouble like our friends do in our own time and scene. This would be complementary reading to other works that examine one of the most documented scenes and times of punk. Because the first wave of punk in Los Angeles is so well noted I would look askance at anyone saying this is essential. But it's damn good at what it does as a character study. These aimless and destructive people probably inspired the new kids at the show to do things in a brave way, like name their band Wasted Youth. I can also care enough for the bigger picture to read past my reaction to the stupid scenarios of the middle section.

At the heart of the story is the death of Sid Vicious. The main character, Allan MacDonell, strikes me as akin to the malevolent-reckless-careless-blackout-drunk kind of person we know of Sid or the friends of Sid. *Punk Elegies* spends many pages leering at needle drug use. Torture Porn. Allan in some ways does everything to ensure the worst possible outcome—well, sometimes a good laugh can be found. The book wanders through a series of bad choices and ends with the news of Darby Crash's death. That news tops the building dog pile of tragedy. A finale sees a road trip to rainy San Francisco and into a South of Market Bathhouse. You can practically smell the naked flesh and steam from these pages.

Despite the title, this book is not really poetic. It evokes nothing resembling the type of sloggy song you might hear while watching a movie like *Suburbia*. The story does not rhyme and has no discernible musical pattern organizing the events. The writing format is plain old memoir. He may be presenting a heartbreak for the world to see. I think we are ultimately to really *feel* Darby's loss but the overall tone of voice isn't too occupied in sounding reflective. The past comes to us in the present moment. In a few passages linear time is disjointed. This hopscotching through time plus the relentless entries depicting hopeless people getting fucked up, makes reading the book feel like a confusing and terrible dream, especially one created after a night of intoxication. The actual quality of writing isn't phased by all the excess and recklessness. The Allan as writer can hold together sentences and he employs effective skills of storytelling. He manages to make this read like a novel more than an old fucker longing for bygone days.

The events of this book signify a breach in how people live in the punk scene between now and then. The Allan in the story and many other in his community don't think twice about ingesting angel dust, shitting on someone's floor, ripping people off, getting too incapacitated before interviewing for the dream job, or getting too loaded to drive a car. There are characters to be found who challenge this suicide pact, namely Tommie, who can only shake her head at his antics. She seems to maintain a life of stability and creativity as entropy happens in front of her—usually in her living room. In an interview I found online the author admits that she is a composite of various people. This style of prose that documents reality and embellishes it with a touch of fiction reminds me of later Cometbus. I am not distracted while reading that certain details are constructed. Other people may feel ripped off by not getting a dirty window into history. The story is pretty cool as it is. Worthy of sneaking it into a hiding spot under the pillow and playing with in the dead of night.

— Robert Eggplant




***Punks Git Cut: A Zine Anthology***
**Jay Howell**
**Last Gasp**
**420 pgs (*No accident!*) | $25**

Many years ago in San Francisco, I bought a comic zine called *Chairdad* written by some mysterious person named Tika Hall. The concept is exactly what you think: a sad, divorced, alcoholic man whose top half is a dad, and whose bottom half is a wooden chair. The zine was filled with sophomoric humor: ideas for bad t-shirt designs, drawings of disgusting taco toppings, one-liners, and a whole page dedicated to Slurpee fan art. For someone who doesn't generally appreciate that kind of stuff, I absolutely loved *Chairdad* and forced it on all my friends. I was met with glazed eyes and confused looks, and in return would sputter, "No!

You just don't get it! He's half chair, half dad! It's genius!"

I'm still convinced *Chairdad* is a great idea whose time will come, but all this is to say, the hefty new anthology *Punks Git Cut* by Jay Howell just be might *your* very own Chairdad. It starts off pretty rough, like looking through the notebook of a not particularly clever fourteen-year-old boy. Most of the content centers around boners, skateboarding, skateboarding boners, burritos, skateboarding burritos…you get the idea.

But stick around long enough and both the art and content improve drastically. Howell's sparse drawings transform into a sort of punk *School House Rock* with a little bit of those Red Bull cartoons mixed in. The subject matter also gets funnier, creepier, and more politically aware. There's an excellent dig at Shepard Fairey featuring two white characters with the words "WHAT ARE YOU WHEATPASTING?" written at the top. "Black guy!" responds one character. "Poor person with a machine gun!" says the other. Next we get a comic called "The Dark Wave" about a black metal singer who uses a coffin as a surfboard. It's well executed and beautiful to look at—miles away from Howell's earlier work. In the final section we get interpretive color illustrations of old pulp covers with titles like "To Tame a Vixen" and "Autumn of the Witch," as well as a heartwarming comic about a party girl who is best friends with a wolf. *Punks Git Cut* proves that actually, sometimes growing up just means refining your craft and having more to say. But hey, if that's not your bag, there are plenty of drawings of guys sticking their boners into birthday cakes to keep you happy.

—Arielle Burgdorf

***Perpetual Conversion: 30 Years and Counting in the Life of Metal Veteran Dan Lilker***
**Dave Hofer**
**Handshake Inc.**
**176 pgs**

In the spirit of this book, I'd like to start with a short Dan Lilker story. In 2007 my death metal band played a tiny venue here in Toronto with Crucifist from Rochester, NY. I had only discovered a few weeks prior that Dan Lilker lived in Rochester and was somehow playing bass for them. Very cool! As people began trickling in to the show, I spied Dan's unmistakably tall frame and mass of hair and wandered over, beer in hand. Dan was incredibly cool as I told him I was a huge fan and that it was awesome to play together. He told me that the border guards were total assholes and had impounded his spiked gauntlets. Smalltalk having concluded, Dan gazed wistfully at my shitty tall can of beer. "Hey man, how much are those beers here?" he asked. They were $6. As Dan forlornly examined the contents of his pocket, he sighed, "I guess I gotta go see if we sold any merch" and began to walk away. So here I am in this crummy venue and the very guy from my Nuclear Assault poster in my high school locker, the guy who wrote the opening riff of Brutal Truth's "Birth of Ignorance" can't swing a beer. Not fucking happening.

I happily bought Dan a tall can and introduced him to the resident pothead in our band so he could get high after what sounded like a lot of trouble to play some measly show in Canada. Later on, visibly baked and with a huge grin on his face, I watched Dan Lilker, 40-something play his bass so fucking hard and with so much vigor and precision. I clearly remember thinking to myself: "Thank god this guy is still playing in bands!".

Few people in the world of punk or metal have cast such a wide and eclectic web during their lives. Ten'll get you twenty that you've heard at least one band Dan Lilker has played in. Whether headlining massive festivals or trawling across the far reaches of the planet in a shitty, busted up van, he's seen musical trends come and go firsthand and has not stopped writing, touring, or playing bass for over thirty plus years. Music fan, roadie and biographer Dave Hofer has fortunately taken it upon himself to extensively interview Lilker along with his peers and family members to produce a wonderfully valuable and totally enjoyable biography that is worth tracking down for anyone interested in the history of punk, metal, and hardcore.

Hofer's interviews allow Dan and many other to spin 1001 tales from the trenches of hardcore and heavy metal. Lilker relates his early days as a young Jewish native of Bayside, Queens filtered through the archetypal mix of cool older siblings and weed, as well as Sabbath and Zeppelin. His musical awakening in high school is a great window into the nascent punk and metal scenes of the early '80s, culminating in the surreal experience of being nineteen years old and signing to Megaforce Records with Anthrax. Almost as surreal as the reason for his abrupt dismissal from said band. You'll have to read the book, but trust me, it's stupider than you think!

Lilker's recollections are lucid and extremely good-natured as recounts his subsequent adventures with S.O.D. and Nuclear Assault. Relevant and hilarious stories about everything from scene politics, the viper's nest of the music industry and the grind of touring abound as Dan pieces together his remarkable career. Part of the real worth of this book is that neither age nor "success" have bent his perspective or his self-awareness. Reading through, it makes perfect sense that Lilker would leave the perch of Nuclear Assault behind to start Brutal Truth and spend years touring for significantly less money and exposure.

Dan Lilker's pursuit of heavy, satisfying music has seen him play everything from the headlining stage at Wacken all the way to basement gigs, and still continues today. *Perpetual Conversion* is worthwhile foremost because we're spared the sneering derision of Dave Mustaine or the pretentious thumbsucking of Lars Ulrich or other clueless talking heads in favor of meaningful, entertaining dispatches from a well-grounded, relevant lifer. Lilker truly embodies those important words: "If you're not now, you never were" and for that this book is definitely worth seeking out.

—Dave Kristiansen

***Dirty River: A Queer Femme of Color Dreaming Her Way Home***
**Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha**
**Arsenal Pulp Press**
**$18.95 | 237 pgs**

As soon as I finished *Dirty River* I could think of at least ten people in my life who would enjoy the book, for completely different reasons. *Dirty River,* like *Bastard Out of Carolina, Nevada,* or *Zami,* will fill a gaping hole in some people's hearts. This book touches on so many issues that are important to people I know: surviving abuse, queerness, racism and colorism, being an undocumented immigrant, mental health, disabilities and chronic illness, and growing up poor. Although it's primarily a survivor story, *Dirty River* resists mainstream survivor narratives centered around transformation through therapy and/or criminal justice. Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha does transform over the course of the narrative, but she is really only becoming more herself. Her values and commitment to helping others don't change—what does is that she eventually finds a healthy environment, true friends, and a loving community to participate in.

Leah is a talented writer who knows how to keep the story moving. Moments that could've felt incredibly sad and harsh were always mixed with a sense of adventure and possibility. There are some typical crusty anarcho punk kid moments that the book nails, like being a baby radical trying to get your shitty manarchist partner unlearn his behavior through "the *Men Who Hurt the People Who Love Them* book we'd mail-ordered." I totally remember everyone I know going through stuff like that in the early 2000s! All these compassionate women getting their partners to read

zines about consent and accountability that didn't solve anything, and then leaving punk or activism because nothing changed. She also gets into how challenging it was to be a person of color in punk during the '90s: "We loved punk rock and hated it and bitched constantly in our rooms about it and couldn't figure out how to go elsewhere, or where that elsewhere was. I'd had so many angst-ridden conversations…with The One Brown Kid, both us shivering in our insecurity." Even when Leah finds other people of color, internalized racism is a huge problem. People reject her because she's mixed and has light skin, and she feels ashamed buying Sri Lankan ingredients in grocery stores. Eventually, though, Leah manages to find pride in her heritage and people who accept her as is.

The most powerful thing *Dirty River* does is allow multiple truths to exist in the same space. Leah's mother is a sexual abuser, but she is also a woman who is desperate for her daughter to find a way out of poverty and encourages her to write. Leah tells her stories in way that supports their complexity, without the need to defend her mother or demonize her. Many of us who have experienced incest or intimate partner violence will be able to relate to the confusion over hating someone and what they did to you while simultaneously wanting to protect them or excuse their behavior, but neither extreme has to be the complete story.

I also love how Leah is unapologetically queer, but not in the way we've come to expect. She identifies as queer throughout but doesn't start sleeping with anyone besides cis dudes until she's much older. She casually mentions dating men and women without the fretting or explanations. Her presentation seems to say: yes, I am queer; yes, I am sure; yes, I am attracted to a variety of genders, don't worry about it. Eventually she gets her whirlwind romance, "her making me strawberry crepes with whipped cream, walking the railroad tracks and fucking in an abandoned truck with POOR graffitied on the side, bonding over growing up broke, her making me mixtapes with Ms. Dynamite and the Pogues singing 'Dirty Old Town.'" But even when the relationship ends, the story moves on, because this is not a survivor narrative where the solution is finding a supportive partner. Likewise, her sexuality shifts from self-identified "slut" to celibate for three years. Neither of these is treated as final or authentic, just whatever she wanted/needed at the time.

*Dirty River* is for anyone stuck in a difficult situation, a testament that you can break free and land on your feet. True escape might take awhile, might take years. Healing from your past will probably not look like expensive therapy, emotional stability, financial success, and a calm suburban life. It might look a lot more like sweaty moshing, double-dip mescaline, lipstick, fucking all night, drinking *cafe con leche*, and reading poetry. But, *Dirty River* tells us, this future is absolutely worth fighting for.

—Arielle Burgdorf

# MOVIES

## BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

**CAROLYN KEDDY**

While I am well familiar with the overall history of punk and easily get bored hearing the same shit over and over, I always enjoy a new twist or tale from some previously unexplored region. **subCCultured: The Rise of DIY Rock In Corpus Christi (1985-1995)** takes us to Corpus Christi, Texas where although punk arrived later than most other places there was already a DIY metal scene happening. That being the case there is a lot of metal in this film.

Since I had never heard of most of the bands in **subCCultured: The Rise of DIY Rock In Corpus Christi (1985-1995)** I was ready to learn. Some of the bands included are Zip!, Angkor Wat, Devastation, Final Assault, Nimbus, Purple Mushroom, Selk and Loser. The interesting thing about small town music scenes is that different genre bands play shows together. People go to see and enjoy different types of bands. Although metal seems to be the biggest genre in Corpus Christi there were also punk, hardcore, new wave and industrial bands on bills. Another advantage is the lack of competition. A local band show would attract hundreds of people.

In the beginning the scene was very insular. Touring bands would rarely make the trip down to the southeastern side of Texas. Patti Smith played there in the '70s. Iggy Pop did a show in 1983. Yet, it was Die Kreuzen who sparked an underground interest in making Corpus Christi a tour stop. After reading a *Maximum Rocknroll* scene report by Tim Stegall, Die Kreuzen called him up to see if they could get a show in town. They played and the show is remembered fondly by all who attended. Not so cool were the Cro-Mags who demanded a specific PA system. It was almost impossible for the DIY promoters to find it and The Cro Mags threatened to cancel the show. After one is tracked down the band still complained about the sound and the food.

The reassuring thing I walk away from **subCCultured: The Rise of DIY Rock In Corpus Christi (1985-1995)** with is the sense that the scene continues to evolve and rejuvenate. Bands break up. Some move to bigger cities like Austin and Houston. New ones pop up. Other people start booking shows. New spots are found to have the shows. Unlike the historical weight felt by bigger cities with more well-known bands, Corpus Christi is able to keep its nostalgia in check. While taking the time to look at the past, you still get the feeling that things continue on as they have been.

At almost two hours, **subCCultured: The Rise of DIY Rock In Corpus Christi (1985-1995)** is a bit long. One hour seems to be the best length for a music documentary. When you aren't familiar with a scene it starts to get monotonous and is somewhat unnecessary to hear a barrage of band names and who was in what band. I was also distracted by a box shaped microphone placed on each interviewee's clothing. Although not particularly nice to look at, especially the way some wore it, it did get good sound. Each person can be heard clearly no matter what the locale. Other documentary makers should look into this device.

On a nice end note the proceeds from **subCCultured: The Rise of DIY Rock In Corpus Christi (1985-1995)** go to TFC Rehearsal Studios, a rehearsal and recording complex with record store in Corpus Christi. So buy a copy of the DVD. (facebook.com/subccultureddocumentary)

I joked in the middle of **Clockwork Orange County** that it seemed as if the filmmakers compiled all the interviews people had done for other punk documentaries. I began listening closely to see if any specifics were mentioned to make this new footage. Of course, that made it funnier when Keith Morris said something rather generic about punk.

**Clockwork Orange County** takes a look at the start of punk in Orange County, CA focusing on the Costa Mesa club the Cuckoo's Nest. The scene develops as teenagers from wealthy families had nothing to do. They were skaters who got into punk rock. Like most of these punk documentaries there are a bunch of male talking heads looking back on their punk days while staking their claims on who was first. The Crowd's Jim Decker humorously claims he invented slam dancing. He also states that kids don't have house parties these days and will never get to have that experience the original OC punks did.

The Cuckoo's Nest started out as a cover band bar which ultimately started booking the local punk bands. The club also booked some bigger bands. The Ramones and Iggy Pop played there. But mostly it was a hangout for the local punks. As such there were problems with the neighboring cowboy bar Zubie's as well as other local merchants, the police and eventually the city council. Owner Jerry Roach finally gives in and closes the bar when the city bans dancing there and starts arresting people as they try to get into the club.

**Clockwork Orange County** contains a lot of great footage from the Cuckoo's Nest. There are live performances from Circle Jerks and Black Flag plus interviews with punks, Roach, bouncers and even a cop. This is the best stuff in the film. After thinking too bad the filmmakers didn't just release that film, I was happy to recall I had a copy of it. The film is called **Urban Struggle: The Battle Of The Cuckoo's Nest**. It was made in 1981 by then film student Paul Young. Confusingly he gets a simple camera operator credit on **Clockwork Orange County**. I researched and found out why.

Roach claims he owns **Urban Struggle: The Battle Of The Cuckoo's Nest.** He is listed on the film as producer. Young disagrees with that claim. Ownership always seems to cause controversy, but still Young should have gotten more credit for his work. If I was **Clockwork Orange County** director Jonathan W.C. Mills I would feel pretty lame about taking credit for someone else's work. It seems some legal fight may have come up at **Clockwork Orange County**'s premiere at the 2010 Newport Beach Film Festival when the film was called We Were Feared. Although I couldn't find out what the result was, I assume it's all been settled since this DVD exists.

**Urban Struggle: The Battle Of The Cuckoo's Nest** is a more interesting film. **Clockwork Orange County** ends with a segment on the impact of the Orange County scene. Henry Rollins claims everyone knew at the time that something great was happening while Morris says that's bullshit. Hindsight is 20/20, but seeing a film made at the time always has more of an impact when seen thirty years later. It's too bad **Urban Struggle: The Battle Of The Cuckoo's Nest** wasn't included as an extra. (mvd.com)

*I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, c/o* Maximum Rocknroll*, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. carolynkeddy.com*

# RECORDS

Send two copies of vinyl or CD-only releases to **PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA**. We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore, etc.—no major labels or labels exclusively distributed by major-affiliated distros. Releases without vocals or drums will not be considered. All vinyl releases will be added to our archive, the largest public collection of punk records in the world. Please include contact information and let us know where your band is from! *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.*

**Reviewers:**
(AM) Allan McNaughton
(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(AU) Andrew Underwood
(BA) Mike Battleaxe
(BW) Brendan Wells
(CK) Carolyn Keddy
(CR) Camylle Reynolds
(DG) Dan Goetz
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EW) Eli Wald
(FS) Fred Schrunk
(GA) Grace Ambrose
(GB) Graham Booth
(GH) Greg Harvester
(JD) Justin Davisson
(JK) Jon Kortland
(JM) Jeff Mason
(JR) Jason Ryan
(JU) Justin Briggs
(KK) Kenny Kaos
(LG) Layla Gibbon
(LP) Langford Poh
(LT) Lena Tahmassian
(MA) Matt Badenhop
(MC) Mitch Cardwell
(MM) Marissa Magic
(MW) Max Wickham
(PA) Pete Avery
(RK) Ramsey Kanaan
(RL) Ray Lujan
(RW) Ryan Wells
(RO) Rotten Ron Ready
(WB) Will Blomquist
(WN) Robert Collins

**THE ACT WE ACT – CD**

This Japanese band has an eclectic sound. The seven-piece combo goes from saxophone led soft rock to spastic MINUTEMEN style art punk. They also toe that arty indie rock line à la GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR with vocals in Japanese. There's a lot going on here, and these guys are decent at it. (RL)
(Iscollagecollective)

**ADACTA – "TMA" LP**

These guys are doing the TRADGEDY/FROM ASHES RISE melodic crust thing. It's pretty hard to impress me with this style these days, and these guys don't even come close. Their moody leads are hella predictable, and there are way too many of them. Their mid-tempo D-beats just drag along. This whole thing is seriously lacking intensity or urgency or whatever. (BA)
(Adactive / F Fud / Forum Absurdum / Haluzeum Produkt / Heavy Metal Vomit Party / Ingot Andejco / PHR / SKPI / Sovoboda / Totalitarianism Still Continues / Veva / Wahnfried)

**ELSE ADMIRE & THE BREITENGÜSSBACH DOLLS – "Hard Rock" LP**

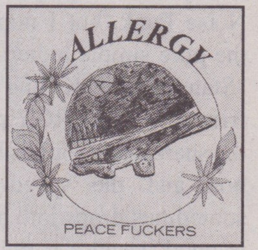
I can't help but mention that the back of this record says "Guaranteed Bowie Free!!" Ironic and ill-timed being that he just died four days ago. I'll try to not let it cloud my whole listening experience, but, you know, ELSE ADMIRE & THE BREITENGÜSSBACH DOLLS could use a little BOWIE. If I am to believe that ADMIRE has been making music for thirty years and is considered a German underground legend I am going to need more proof than this LP. The music is very simplistic. The vocals are spoken and flat. It doesn't help that the first song quotes the SCORPIONS. The catchiest song, "My Little Spider," has lyrics that come across as skeezy in the worst perverted creep kind of a way. A flippant attitude only succeeds when justified. (CK)
(Fränkische Schallplattenindustrie)

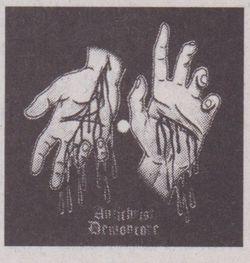
**A FRAMES – LP**

Originally released by S-S in 2002 (I attended the record release show!) and available again, the debut LP by Seattle's now-gone A FRAMES remains the band's punkest moment. They never made a false move in their career, but if you were dead-set on converting one of your spikier buddies to this band's glory, this would be the record you'd play for them. It would work too: who'd shrug off a re-imagined blend of art-punk that borrowed only from the classiest, iciest and most powerful sources? The economy of WIRE, the rhythmic power of Australia's X, the cold guitars of UK post-punk, the adventurousness of Cle-punk legends...all here, all assembled with scientific precision. This album has been burned into my DNA since the dawn of this century, yet I'm still taken aback by the focus and precision of every song. "Electric Eye" and "Hostage Crisis" are just impossible to shake, whereas "Surveillance Camera" continues to haunt. Just perfect! The entire aesthetic of this band, ably coaxed and recorded by co-conspirators Chris Woodhouse and SS, is truly one of the greatest marvels in punk post-2000. I'll say it now, as enough time has passed: a classic punk rock record. Get it immediately. (MC)
(S-S)

**A FRAMES – "2" LP**

A FRAMES are one of those early '00s bands that ended up defining that whole period of outside sound. They were one of the outfits that made it OK to expand influences outside of the normal catalog, including swampy krautrock, robotic No Wave, and early-'80s indie post-punk, while still coming off like a goddamn *garage* band instead of a pack of noodling, heads-down, indie-prog schmucks like all



the hack SONIC YOUTH worshippers of that time whose jam records (no names, yawwwwwn) now clog the discount bins. It felt punk rock then, still does. These guys wrote great songs, didn't just lean on guitar effects or leaden feedback fuzz to fill in the dead spaces where the soul was supposed to go, and history tends to reward those bands with the good songs. So, thirteen years after initial release, "the market" gets a deserved reissue, still on the S-S Records label that released it back in 2003. If you want to get all "Way-Back Machine" and recreate the best live scene circa 2003, pick up the first HUNCHES LP, any HOSPITALS, a LOST SOUNDS, a bit of COUNTRY TEASERS, LIGHTNING BOLT...and either this LP or their debut, also just reissued by S-S. Done. (RW)
(S-S)

**ALLERGY – "Peace Fuckers" flexi EP**

Oh, hi Noise Punk, seems you've been doing well since we last met? Sometimes I wish you would play less silly bouncy stuff, Noise Punk, but I nonetheless appreciate the pure simple ludicrousity of tracks like "State Justified Killing" that you have your friends in ALLERGY play. I also like how the snare drum sounds like a wet cardboard box and the speed-picking bass that sometimes drops into a sweet groove (this is good because it reminds us that Noise Punks can still play like motherfukkrs, plus there's no way to discern any actual notes from the guitar anyway) and good job slapping these tracks onto a flexi instead of a hard wax thing and I like the cartoony drawings of drunk punks on the lyric sheet. You know what you're doing, Noise Punk, and you picked some good monkeys to teach us all a lesson. We are tourists but, for ALLERGY, this is life. So thanks, Noise Punk, for another lesson. (Reader: ALLERGY are from Florida, and they play killer, hi-energy Noise Punk with guitars distorted to oblivion…like they should be.) (WN)
(Vinyl Rites)

**ANTICHRIST DEMONCORE – "Burn Out" flexi EP**

I stopped paying attention to this merchcore outfit after they so ignorantly defended their refusal to drop off of the infamous CASUALTIES / NEGATIVE APPROACH tour in 2013, and this barely-playable flexi *postcard* certainly isn't making me regret this decision. If you want phoned-in eighth-generation "brutal" hardcore lyrics (*"It's not murder / if I want to die")* over phoned-in eighth-generation powerviolence breakdowns, you've come to the right place. The pop-culture fanboy anthem "Science ist Krieg" is truly cringe-worthy, revealing ACXDC as the grind world's equivalent of Richard Dawkins. MRAs of the world, unite and take over. (WB)
(To Live A Lie)

**ARTIFICIAL DISSEMINATION – "Take Us To Your Leader" LP**

The music can get too metal for me at times, but there is something really fun about this band. ARTIFICIAL DISSEMINATION are a duo from Canada. They bash out a bunch of short rock thrashers on this LP. The male singer apes Lemmy (RIP) at times. However, when the adrenalin gets kicking, and the female backing vocals crash the party, like on the cool garage punk-y rocker "Charms," I really like the way this sounds. This LP also comes with a funny zine called *DISSemination News* and some stickers, too. (CK)
(Seminal)

**ASSASSINATE – "Legion" EP**

A worthy tribute to their fallen comrade Joe "Jizz" Crane, this is a posthumous follow-up to the sole EP released during the band's lifetime, and was originally recorded all the way back in 2004. The opening track is a bona fide Portland D-beat ripper, replete with galloping drums and dark guitars, and it's no surprise to learn from the liner notes that ASSASSINATE was originally the brainchild of Hopper from HELLSHOCK, DETESTATION, et al. "Love Lepers" and "Urgency" dial back the heavy in favor of catchy PARTISANS-influenced raw punk, while the straight-on fury of "Nothing Left" is punctuated by four or five seconds of absolutely *insane* noizey guitar chaos. An outstanding effort across the board, it's rad that these tracks are finally seeing the light of day. (WB)
(Distort Reality / Whisper in Darkness)

**AUDIO VISCERAL – "Cildce Bihaver" CD**

I listened to this CD from front and to back while trying to have a feeling (any feeling) about it. I failed. I think the closest I got was during the fourth song ("Corduroy"), which is a departure from the rest of the album and takes on pop sensibilities similar to Las Cruces' LOW CULTURE. The other songs are fairly basic, simplistic, short songs about women, drinking, and more stuff in the vein of early QUEERS or the NOBODYS. (GH)
(Sudden Death)

**AUTOROLL – "Shadows" CD**

A traditional Japanese hardcore band that's every bit as good as a pedigree that includes ASSAULT, KGS and ALLIANCE would suggest. Killer riffs, and the leads are super subtle, buried underneath a wall of guitars like a reward for paying attention. "New Life" is that absolute banger of the month for this guy, with a bridge that winds you up soooo tight and never fully lets go—one of the tensest tracks I've come across in ages. Long running band, but this is their first full-length release…it was worth the wait. Mandatory. (WN)
(Too Circle)

**BANDAGES – "All Extreme Measures/ Tokyo Carwash"**

If they had an award for hardass bands that sound like CULT RITUAL without all the screamo vibes, BANDAGES would win in spades. Honestly, I was assuming this would be some WHATEVER BRAINS type shit but instead was met with a weird KING DIAMOND funeral dirge accompanied by atmospheric accordion. I'm all for people getting weird, and when the song finally kicks in it feels like a punch in the face. The A-side stops and starts, awash with guitar work and tempo reminiscent of BL'AST! but with a crunch like FAILURES and with an ending that sounds like the breakdown on a CROWBAR track. The B-side is a mid-tempo jammer reminiscent of the first DOUBLE NEGATIVE LP (this band shares members) but maybe with more teeth gnashing. I feel like this record is *Journey to the Center of the Mind* for disaffected punks in 2016. For fans of: chain smoking, stick'n'pokes, torrential downpour. (MW)
(Sorry State)

**BORZOI – "Pinnacle" EP**

Damn, son. I mean, you never know what you're gonna get each month, but this is an unexpected little surprise. I much prefer

the A-side—dare I call it shitgaze, or a garagey-er Slumberland? Real thick production with chimey guitars à la HÜSKER DÜ, but smarmy, infectious vox def of this century. B-side is equally thick but with the more conventional ATX Emos/Kozik-core you might expect from an Austin band. I get it, they can shred, but rockin' with your cock out is hella overplayed, I'll take more like the A-side please... (GB)
(Pau Wau)

**BRAT FARRAR – "Being With You That Night" EP**

This is a guy from Aussie band DIGGER AND THE PUSSYCATS solo under an alias named after an old book. Not really familiar with that band, but this is some synthy radio friendly pop like the KILLERS or maybe the HARD ONS on the tougher song. Not horrible but not really necessary with so many good records this month. (RO)
(Hound Gawd)

**BRISK RANGE REJECTS – "The Old Town" EP**

After two listens, I'm still not sure if I love this record or if it's simple garbage. Neanderthal lo-fi Oi! punk tracks with lyrics fit for a SOCKEYE outtakes compilation. Yeah, you guessed right: *I love it!* (WN)
(self-released)

**BUTCHER BABY – "Another Monday Comedown" CD**

Never heard of this UK quartet, but on these seven tracks they take that early GBH / ENGLISH DOGS (pre-metal) driving sound and have a good time with it, for sure. Nothing original, but fans of said genre (including me!) won't be disappointed. Lots of raging, and some fine metallic lead guitar. (RK)
(Headcheck)

**CAFFIENDS – "No Gods No Decaf" CD**

These Florida guys dish out the '90s style pop punk. This is very reminiscent of early BLINK 182—Tom DeLonge style vocals or the vocal tone of the DEAD MILKMEN. They're a self-proclaimed fun party band. Musically, I'm thinking Fat/Lookout type stuff à la QUEERS, WEASEL, and MR.T. A sound done to death by now, but these guys are aiming to keep fun and funny pop punk alive. (RL)
(Anti-Authority)

**CAVE STATE – "Scarce" EP**

Pretty sick start-stop powerviolence done in the LA style. You know the drill: blazingly fast then punishingly slow and over in about thirty seconds. This isn't anything groundbreaking, but it's done very well. I'm just glad people still play this shit. Fans of LACK OF INTEREST, skateboarding on broken glass, and spray-painting police stations should check this out! Powerviolence forever! (BA)
(Deep Six)

**CHOKE CHAINS – CD**

First off, I am not a fan of the band name. CHOKE CHAINS is the latest band from Tom Potter of BANTAM ROOSTER and DIRTBOMBS, and it also features an ex-CHINESE MILLIONAIRES and an ex-NO BAILS. It is as wild and distorted as you'd expect. I like it when older guys sound more pissed off than the kids. (CK)
(Black Gladiator / Slovenly)

**COMA CLUB – EP**

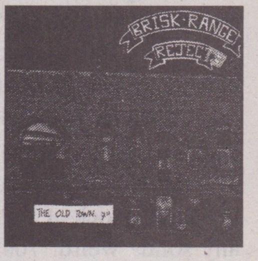
Man, these guys sound like perfect *Golden Shower Of Hits*-era CIRCLE JERKS. You know, right before they got too rocked-out. The singer has the snotty lisping voice of Keith Morris in his prime. Not a rip off, though. These gents add their own style into the mix, but I'm seriously skanking around my living room with my cat listening to this. A fine first release from Frisco's Rockery label. So you can cuss, spit, throw bottles....well you know how that ends, so just buy the record. (RO)
(The Rockery / Vandelay Arts)

**CONTROLLED BY FEAR – "The Only Good Cop Is A Dead One" LP**

Perth's CONTROLLED BY FEAR blast out furious and sometimes (and I mean this *positively)* inept grind / hardcore that never lets up. The band recorded this LP on four-track back in 1989, but it sat in someone's shoebox until now. I'm assuming that it's being pressed on vinyl due to the recent death of vocalist Andrew Sheen, who is the person that makes this band truly vicious. CONTROLLED BY FEAR keeps it short and simple, attacking religion, *MTV,* prison, racism, shitty attitudes, and everything in between. The vocals and music are all over-the-top with the distorted beauty that only a four track can make, twenty-three songs in all. I wish there was a lyric sheet. The members went on to play in RUPTURE, STUMBLEFUCK, FAT LIP, and NAILED DOWN, which should give you an idea of what you're in for. Good shit. R.I.P. (GH)
(Hate Ape Productions)

**CRAP DETECTORS – "My Generation Compromised From Birth or Nothing Has Changed But the Length of the Hair" LP**

LOL, I never saw this coming. Upon first glance I figured this was a long overdue straight reissue of Nebraska's legendary CRAP DETECTORS killer first LP from 1977, since the artwork borrows heavily



from it, but upon further investigation this is actually a compilation of previously unreleased tape-only tracks recorded in the four years prior, 1973-1976. There are a few passing glimpses of what was to come in glammy/KBD/proto-punk greatness, but this here is mostly of the long lost acid-fueled basement noodling, hella analog synths, and knob twiddling ilk. The bonus here being that, unlike many of Jacobi's contemporaries who were straight aping Todd and Bowie with wuss studio pop machinations, this shit is the fully blasted overblown trash you always hoped it would be. I'm currently unconvinced that there is a bonafide "hit" lurking here, but that said, it's sure to jock at least a few positions on any solid "weird '70s" record shelf. Only remaining question is, which tracks amidst the five cassettes did someone miss? Great job, must be limited, as I can't imagine anyone banking on selling more than a couple hundred of these. (GB)
(Brain Transplant)

**DEAD CAT STIMPY – "Uneasy Grounds" CD**

Ultra-bluesy one-man rock from this Dutch guy. His voice is so deep. It sounds like an authentic southern blues man (except for the accent). The sound is crude and menacing. I like it a lot. (CK)
(Off Label)

**DEAD CLONES – "This Clone" CD**

A rather stellar collection of eleven mid-paced rockers. Seems to be the brainchild of songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Christian Fontana from Brazil, though all of the songs are sung in English. The keyboard flourishes make this as much CARS as it is EDDIE & THE HOT RODS, and is all the better for it! (RK)
(self-released)

**DEFECT DEFECT – "My Life Is Like Death" EP**

DEFECT DEFECT broke up and then they were immediately offered a record and a Japanese tour. What would you do? Yeah, they got back together to record this and then they ran off to Japan for a week or so. I can't blame them. Their singer, Colin, took over on guitar for this one, and the results are less finessed than their previous releases, as one might expect. Still, it sounds like them. They play sub-genre-less punk that is both self-reflective and critical of the scene that they find themselves in. The title track fell flat with me (it sounds like it was written in a rush), but the other two songs are great. "Wrong With Me" is really catchy and touches on trying to find ways out of the mental destruction that many of us deal with on a daily basis. "Glass Crass" is an angry tirade about all that we can accomplish if the punks banded together and, like, killed all the cops. This is a beautiful thought, but I'm too jaded to believe in it…but so is DEFECT DEFECT. Overall, the record is good, but sounds a little rushed (because it was) and rough around the edges. You can take this as urgency if you'd like. There's nothing wrong with that. (GH)
(Dirt Cult / Snuffy Smiles)

**DELETER – "Oblique Sessions" LP**

WIRE worship is a difficult cult to navigate for a lot of punk singers. It is not easy to decide if you're going to go for that monotone, affectless approach or actually let your voice come through and risk doing a disservice to the sparse severity of the music itself (à la MIKE WATT doing "The 15th" on that WIRE cover album). The vocals here are pushed front-and-center, and the delivery skews towards the dramatic. Musically, *Oblique Sessions* reminds me a lot of *Chairs Missing* and *154*, but when the violinist and cellist show up to close out a couple tracks on the B-side, I also hear a little bit of ALICE COOPER's *Killer*, my favorite record. The lyrics move fast and demand more consideration than these minute-and-a-half long tracks allow on one spin. As it so happens, this record comes with an illustrated 14-page 8"x8" lyrics booklet. If you have the time and energy to dive into this one, I'd recommend it. (EW)
(25 Diamonds)

**DIRT QUEEN – "Palace of Depression / Animal/TheCage"**

This 7" has the '90s smeared all over it, from the handmade fold-over cover/insert to the breathy emo bark of the vocalist. I wouldn't be surprised if these Philly lads live off a steady diet of FUGAZI / JEHU / HOT SNAKES cookies. Side B contains a surf guitar lead that might just make East Bay Ray blush. (JK)
(Electric Flesh)

**DISCULPE – "Remain Open" EP**

Fuck me! This is good. I didn't think Brits got this pissed anymore with that cunt Maggie gone. Funny artwork with a mascot I've named "Anarchy Pig." This could easily get lumped in with much of what's going on in hardcore. There are evil thrash parts. There are slow-it-down, take-your-shirt-off mosh parts, but those parts are really fucking good, and there's no let up at all. Led by a vocalist who tears and claws out of an inner desperation that only the unlucky ones know. Dark and brief lyrics with just a glimmer of positivity to prevent messy bloodshed. The best is "Fuck-U-Therapy"—that gives you an idea where things took a turn for this bunch. You want a comparison? Go fuck yourself. (RO)
(Keep it in the Family / Tadpole / Opiate)

**DISSEKERAD – "Mörkret Tilltar" LP**

Dis-content to rest on the laurels of their collective time in bands like TOTALITÄR, KRIGSHOT, AVSKUM, INSTITUTION, and MAKABERT FYND, DISSEKERAD's newest effort retains the no-frills approach of their earlier records, anchored by fist-in-the-air riffs and Poffen's legendary vocal presence. The sound here isn't particularly noisy or heavy, allowing the sheer efficiency of the songwriting to shine through, and fans of the classic TOTALITÄR sound are sure to feel right at home with DISSEKERAD's sparse, high-impact approach to D-beat hardcore. A couple of the more melodic moments here left me feeling cold, but that slight speed-up that leads into the guitar solo on the title track could be taught in elementary schools as a shining example of how you write a killer piece of kång. (WB)
(Phobia)

**DNR – "Schoolboys & Cartoon Heroes" LP**

I've seen GBH a few times now. They seem to come through SF every three years, and they always put on a pretty great show. Every time they play, though, I'm always kind of taken aback by the crowd. It seems like my friends and I and then legions of punks in cut-off denim jackets with DWARVES back patches drunkenly yelling about how they saw ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT play with the MENTORS

at the farm in '86 or something. These are the same people that walk around the pit with a finger in the air and a beer clutched to their chest (read: trucker hat, goatee, Dickies shorts cut off at the shin) while they yell "punk-fuckin'-rock." From this time forward, I'm now going to call this type of show "punk rock date night," and DNR will be its gatekeeper. From now on, every time a band cites TURBONEGRO as an influence, you'll know that they're punk rock date night. Also, every song on this record is about a breakup. For fans of punk-fuckin'-rock, leopard print anything, ice cream. (MW)
(Öppyt Akkuj)

**DOGTEETH – "Possession" EP**

This LA band harkens back to the specific '90s political punk sound of bands that were associated with Minneapolis or Seattle and got inaccurately lumped in as "crust" when really they played speedy, simple, and honest hardcore punk. The kind of hardcore with vocals that almost never let up, accentuated by the kinda-but-not-too-thin recording. WHOREHOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES are a definite reference point musically and to some extent lyrically, and the moody riffing points to other Northwest sounds that were to come. The record layout also appears to be only minimally tainted by the computer age, which is eternally a good thing. (DG)
(self-released)

**THE EXPLOITED – "Death Before Dishonour" LP**

Blimey! It's the EXPLOITED in *MRR*. I don't know if younger listeners would get as much of a hoot as I do listening to this. What a good fucking time with songs about the damn Russians pointing missiles at you and me, that cunt Maggie, and, of course, those fucking coppers. The EXPLOITED were definitely turning more metal here, which is fine with my hessian ears. I was always more of a *Troops Of Tomorrow* man myself, but this just makes me smile. (RO)
(PHR)

**THE EXPLOITED – "Horror Epics" LP**

I always felt bad for people who liked the EXPLOITED, and to be honest giving this record (which came out in 1985, which is over 50 years ago) anything but an entirely positive review feels like punching down. You know how when dogs look in a mirror, like 99% of the time they don't even know they're looking at anything let alone themselves, but once in a long while something clicks and they freak out? I feel like if I said, "*the EXPLOITED really are the kind of band idiots like but I feel bad saying that because they're old and will probably (hopefully) die soon*" I might be providing them with that one piece of criticism that totally deflates all their aspirations, all their dread-hawked hopes and dreams. Then I would pretty much be bullying but being bullied is what got me into punk so maybe if I bully the EXPLOITED they'll turn out to be really cool punks like two-hundred years after they started. (BB)
(PHR)

**FALTER – "Darker" EP**

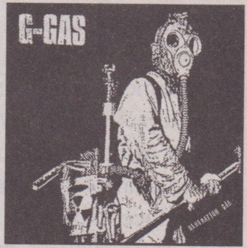
A cacophonous and ominous crusher that breaks into rhythmic pace with discordant delight. A few measures of blastbeat here and there add to the tension without becoming boring, and the speed is truly skilled. The lyrics are about psychological torment and the draining nature of society's constant expectations. I love how utterly disgusted the vocals sounds at the end of side A as the song hammers you down into silence. Side B further demonstrates FALTERS ability to be a nuanced grind band while remaining a hardcore D-beat band with well-placed contemplative moments of doom metal. The cover is demonic custom silkscreened artwork on paper stock that is so thick it's practically vinyl fabric. I'm thinking a much darker, less mathematical CONVERGE or MIND ERASER—this is very good. (JR)
(Hydrogen Man)

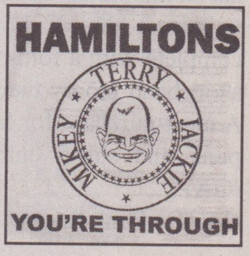
**FIGHT AMP – "Constantly Off" LP**

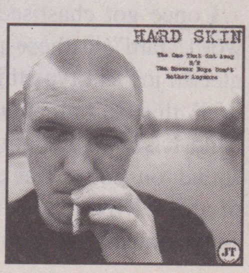
Can you call high production value sludge a guilty pleasure? Whatever, meet me in the tone zone. People think doing a band like this is as easy as investing $4,000 into your guitar rig and attempting SLEEP covers from memory, but writing a song that doesn't send you to the bar for the latest craft seasonal takes some more thought. How, after all, do you write a compelling song when your singer has to constrain their range to, like, three notes? The answer is in arrangement, I guess. This record is not as antagonistic or high concept as HARVEY MILK or the BODY (FIGHT AMP probably have more in common with '90s middle-of-nowhere weirdos like KARP or HAMMERHEAD), but you can hear a similar level of deliberation behind these tracks. This should be on the soundtrack for the reboot of "Road Rash" (that motorcycle video game where you whip bikers with steel chains). (EW)
(Brutal Panda / Knife Hits)

**FIGHT AMP – "No Trace/Hide Your Teeth"**

This two song 7" is very reminiscent of '90s heavy alternative rock. That was a time when bands like FILTER, CLUTCH and TOOL found mainstream success by playing music that had one foot planted in metal, and the other foot in alternative rock radio. If this 7" came out in 1997, there would be a shitload of teenagers in suburbia going crazy for FIGHT



AMP. But now 20 years later, for whatever reason, these types of musicians are labeled as "Guitar Center Rock". And you can't even wear a 311 shirt without getting a few hairy eyeballs. Is that fair? Well, who am I to judge? But if you unapologetically believe the *Crow* soundtrack truly rules, you should do yourself a favor and find FIGHT AMP. (FS)
(Reptilian)

**FRENOPATICSS – "Negros" EP**
Barcelona did it again. This early Spanish punk group of myth finally makes it to their own dedicated slab of vinyl. More famous for their antics than their music, this is the rare case when the tunes live up to the legend. It's a rough recording, sure, but it's pure bliss to these ears—the fourteen-year-old drummer can barely keep it together and certainly can't keep up, the guitars screech and squeal, and it's all coated in a thick layer of crackling tape. It's tuneful though and just so perfectly punk, the best kind of inept, inimitably chaotic. They liked DISCHARGE and CRASS and, if their hand-painted leathers are to be believed, the COCKNEY REJECTS were tops. Often pegged as nihilistic party punks, these FRENOPATICSS actually have quite a bit to say, decrying war, the State, and compulsory military service before we all became inured to men shouting about those topics. They never released a record or tape in their lifetimes—their firm anti-commercial stance extended to refusing to produce music to sell—but members went on to play in bands like GRB and SUBTERRANEAN KIDS. The band has collaborated with Vomito Punk Rock to release this 7" in an edition of 500, complete with a fold-out lyric sheet and a short band bio by their drummer Boliche. A must-purchase for fans of early Spanish punk and shit-fi enthusiasts worldwide. (GA)
(Vomito Punk Rock)

**FUCKTARDS – LP**
I once got chastised for my use of the word "tard" in these pages, so I get sick gleeful joy as I type this. Tard, tard, *tard*!!! Well, this isn't all about me. This Swedish band has an excellent jangly punk guitar sound on some tracks that reminds me of the URINALS. Musically, they don't sound much like that band but do show some old LA influence on the best songs, including the amazing opener, but, the record deteriorates into mundane, generic, fast punk with some embarrassing melodic rock songs with progression. Great beginning, though. (RO)
(self-released)

**FUMIGADOS – "Bobo" EP**
This falls somewhere between VULPESS and a band that could have supported ABRASIVE WHEELS in 1982, but it's true melodic intelligent and soulful street punk! It's really catchy, Erika's vocals are desperate and impassioned, her lyrics radical and romantic, bleeding over a guitar sound that really reminds me of the RIP LP in a cool way…This record has gotten a lot of punk love round these parts and I hope next time they play here I can catch a ride to the show, 'cause I bet it's even sicker live. Plus the cover art makes me think of a kid's tribute to Nick Blinko drawn out in detention. Really great, lots of "former members of…" too if you care about that, and more evidence that the LA punk scene is on fire. (LG)
(Verdugo Discos)

**GENERÁCION SUICIDA – "Edicion Especial Para Latinoamerica" flexi**
It's exactly what you'd expect from GENERACION SUICIDA, the same brand of raw, fast and catchy punk songs that they have given us over their past few records. These two songs are rough cuts, that will soon appear on their third album. This flexi was a one-time pressing made for their South American tour. Act fast, or just wait for the LP. (FS)
(Going Underground)

**G-GAS – "Generation Gas" LP**
This is less of a reissue than an act of full-on punk archeology. Not only did General Speech and Not Very Nice track down copies of this demo that was never commercially released, they tracked down a band member to interview and a live tape to tack on to the B-side as well! The level of dedication and effort that went into this LP is staggering, and the contents were well worth the trouble. G-GAS was around from about 1982 to 1984 and featured current and future members of TRANQUILIZER and LSD, playing a dark, guitar-solo-heavy style of aggressive hard punk with frenetic RUDIMENTARY PENI-style vocals. "Dutch Wife" alone justifies the release, as it's as raging a song as you're likely to find from anywhere in the world of early-'80s punk, but everything else is equally worth hearing. The gem here is the demo material, but the live B-side is definitely worth a listen as well—it's an understandably rough recording but its raw and mean nature shines through, and the band expands some of the songs in unexpected and interesting ways. While much of the ephemera produced by G-GAS has been lost to time, the insert does include a remembrance from Yasushi (of fellow Sapporo legends NAPALM) and a brief interview with the drummer about the history of the band alongside a few rare photos. Whether you're a Japanese hardcore fanatic or just a fan of great '80s punk in general, this is an absolute must-have. Here's hoping that these courageous spelunkers can eventually put together a similarly amazing package for G-GAS contemporaries DEEF as well! (AU)
(General Speech)

**GRAND COLLAPSE / OI POLLOI – split EP**
I haven't listened to any OI POLLOI beyond their early '90s material, but that voice sure is distinct. Aside from the modern production, it's not far off from other stuff I've heard by them. One mid-tempo track attacking the GCHQ and one thrashing tune in Spanish. GRAND COLLAPSE does galloping slick-mall-punk-styled-hardcore (just made that up) that I can't really listen to. Oh yeah: this accompanies *Artcore* zine's 30th anniversary issue, which is probably more enjoyable than the record. (MA)
(Artcore)

**THE HAMILTONS – "You're Through" EP**
You wanna know how much I love the RAMONES? A whole fucking ton, man. You wanna know how much I care about a band that worships the RAMONES sounds in 2016? Zero care, that's how much. This record, and every ounce of the band's shtick, could literally have been conceived, put together, and even recorded in less than an hour and a half, and the whole concept just seems lazy as hell. (DZ)
(Hello)

**HARD SKIN – "The One That Got Away/The Bovver Boys Don't Bother Anymore"**
HARD SKIN! We're Oi! (JU)
(JT Classics)

**HATE RECORDER – "Flinching at the Square Waves" EP**
Nothing's so sonically unforgivable as off-putting vocals. For the most part, the singer for HATE RECORDER is fine, but melodic yelling is a death trap more often than not. That aside, this is a rather good 7". The band combines a HOT SNAKES-style guitar attack with a rhythm section indebted to SHELLAC or something from the AmRep catalogue, and adds a little emo and some mathy breaks to round everything out. Ultimately, everything works, and even more so when they let their pop inclinations shine through, as on the B-side opener "Old News." As an aside, good on HATE RECORDER for using good takes with mistakes in them. It makes the final product sound more genuine and more fun. (LP)
(Humaniterrorist)

**HELLMAISTROZ – "Maldición Violenta" flexi EP**
Immaculately packaged two-song hellcrust banger from Mexico. Absolutely nothing new here under the moon, just fist-banging riffs, flawless WOLFPACK guitars and guttural vocals that spit pure fire. It's so simple, but it's so fukkn right. (WN)
(Exabrupto / Sentimientos de Lucha)

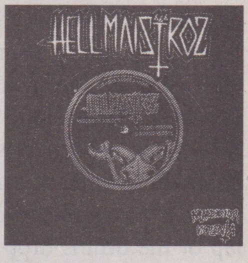
**HOLY MONEY – "Zygote / Make Them Pay" EP**
It's like I'm alone in a bombed out city, but I just found a fat sack of weed blowing in the toxic wind. Damn, dude, whose got some papers? This space sludge is about to freak me out. These guys are somewhere between NOOTHGRUSH and DAMAD. Not a bad place to be, in my book. Features trippy noise accentuations and terrifying banshee shrieks. I say get weird with HOLY MONEY. (B'A)
(RSR)

**HONNÖR SS – "D-Noise Anthem" EP**
Echoing and booming D-beat destruction with intense, ripping snare, droning, long riffs, and bestial dual vocals. This is simply pulverizing D-beat *käng* from Stockholm. I love the constant insect buzz soloing that never takes over too much, spinning in and out of the forefront. The guitar and vocal recording is super fuzzy, retro, and washes over everything, and the bass and drums are grumbling and heavy underneath. The drumming is a tribal storm masterpiece, storm being the key word here, as the entire EP is torrential. Really well done mastering. Side B continues in this furious vain with even more groove. Relentless stuff. This sample with British accents made me laugh a little, too: "In what way is it a political song? (long pause then a slight laugh) "Well, it's in the lyrics, isn't it." Highly recommended for the D-noise maniacs. (JR)
(Konton Crasher)

**HOUND – "Live! At Golden Tea House" LP**
I gotta have some love for some Philly longhairs rocking out in sweaty dive, but this did not get me off the floor at first. It starts off with a MOTÖRHEAD boogie guitar riff but falls quickly into mundane blues rock territory. Much better than the studio album last month, but I was ready to hang my formerly shaggy head down low. That's until the last song on side one, "Born Under A Black Light." Suddenly, my spiked fist starts to rise as I flip that bitch over...and...full headbanging glory. Side two smokes with elements of BUDGIE and that live OBSSESSED album melting into the primordial ooze mainlining through a demon's veins and pumping that arm up Jesus's well-greased ass and leaving you spent by the final chords of "Little One." God blind me, that's good. (RO)
(Bootleggers Banquet)

**HRDINOVE NOVE FRONTY – "Válečný Území" LP**
Here's a cool reissue of one of the first punk LPs out of Czechoslovakia, originally in the early '90s. I checked in with my Czech friend and correspondent and he told me that this was his favorite band as a kid, and they're one of the most important bands from the region. This release is a compilation of songs from three different demos from the '80s. They sung anti-authoritarian and anti-war lyrics in a country with the third biggest army (compared to population) in the world. The sound is raw and primitive, angry and critical sounding, like much of the punk from the East of that time period, but of course in the best way! The content is packed with catchy rhythms, a few fast hardcore tracks, and wildly expressive vocals. The gatefold sleeve includes original art, along with a really nice and large booklet and yellow vinyl. A really nicely presented document that will surely get fans of old Eastern Euro punk drooling. (MA)
(Papagájův Hlasatel)

**INTENSIVE CARE – "Hipsters" CD EP**
Four-track effort from these London (UK) chappies who claim to have been around since 1993. Which I guess, does indeed, make them vintage, if not original. Lyrically, they are spot on, railing against poverty wages and yuppie hipsters (AHAB—All Hipsters Are Bastards). Musically, they cross original UK SUBS with vintage PROPAGANDHI, and you can't really argue with any cover version of "500 Miles." Apparently, as I have just discovered, it's never too late to get with the program. (RK)
(self-released)



**KOHTI TUHOA – "Rutiinin Orja" LP**

Forceful, gut-churning low-end hardcore with piercing, venomous vocals that slap you in the face. Hard to not acknowledge how fierce the voice is, so much the focal point that you kinda get lulled…until the guitar swarms in and drops a lead in your lap or the drums drop off the rails in a fit of manic D-beat / crust fury. This thing is unhinged as fukk, and it seems like nothing at all is holding it together, which is why it's so incredible. Because it's *completely* together and tight as…well, it's just really tight, OK? Uncompromising and relentless don't even scome close to describing this record; the way it's written, the way it's played, the way it's recorded are all damn near perfect and the result is leveling. For anyone that thought crust or D-beat were dead, listen to "Noitavainoa" a few times and check your pulse. This record is incredible. (WN)
(Svart)

**KOSZMAR – "Nuklearna Supremacja" EP**

More blistering speed-crazed D-beat from Vancouver, BC's Polish-language powerhouse KOSZMAR, absolutely top-shelf from start to finish. Culled from the same sessions that produced their fantastic *Jeniec Wojenny* LP, this is surging raw punk with blown-out noizecore production and a great sense of dynamics. The vocals are pissed to point of complete filthiness, and really add to the over-the-top intensity of their unrelenting assault. Why KOSZMAR isn't one of the most popular bands on the West Coast is beyond me, but those who appreciate the likes of D-CLONE, MAUSER and FRAMTID need to get with the program already. (WB)
(Konton Crasher)

**LIFESPITE – "Dead in a Ditch" EP**

Appears to be lauded as a European version of "Holy Terror" hardcore. My thoughts are that ultra low drop tunings do not sound good with blast parts. It makes the drums sound 45 while everything else is 33, slowing the entire part down and diminishing the overall attack. Harmonic guitar leads should never be interjected into an instrumental unless played by a true poodle-haired dirthead. Bouncy jockcore breakdowns are always horrible, but they are made even more horrible following a UK crust part. (JK)
(Deep Six / Reflections / Too Circle)

**ALEX MAIORANO & THE BLACK TALES – "Everything Boom!" CD**

Two Italians move to Berlin to play music. They join up with some others and start doing American soul. Weirder things have happened. The music is straightforward and high energy. There are horns and a keyboard. The singer has a compelling voice. Everything sounds crisp and clean—it could use some grit to make it sound more interesting. In the picture on the back cover the singer looks a lot like David Bowie (RIP). (CK)
(Off Label)

**MARRÓN – "Rut" LP**

Ya know how certain cities have different bars devoted to football teams that aren't from the area, especially here in SF where everyone seems to be from somewhere else? What if, like bars filled with angry, sweaty college football fans, venues were specifically set up to appeal to certain types of hardcore? If that were the case, MARRÓN would play the Rev Summer venue in LA every weekend. This band sounds like a bunch of DC heads got tired of the cold, East Coast winters, and moved to the dry heat of Southern California to write deep, introspective jams that sound like lost IGNITION tapes. MARRÓN has everything: the poetic lyrics, the emotional screams, and the chorus-laden guitar. If you like RITES OF SPRING, this is gonna be for you. I'm jamming. For fans of: Sour Patch Kids, skating all day, giving a shit about the world around you. (MW)
(Take It Back)

**MASSGRAV – "Kill Your Darlings" EP**

I didn't look at this carefully before throwing it on, and was shocked at the catchy, bouncy, even poppy riffs Swedish fiends MASSGRAV were capable of. All was clear when I realized this is an (dreaded? maligned?) all-covers EP. Their takes on HELLNATION, DISKONTO, and especially KRIGSHOT are fine, exactly what you'd expect. Even better are the unexpected (and to me, obscure) Swedish hip-hop, first-wave and trall-punk songs, which take to the MASSGRAV treatment like studs to leather. Two metal bands see their shit ground down as well, and while I love the bands they picked, these tracks don't measure up as well. While this is no GRIDE / LAHAR split, it's not a wasted effort, and will go fine with your other MASSGRAV 7"s. (JM)
(RSR)

**MODERN PROBLEMS – "Foolish Times" LP**

Can't say I really expected much from this so when I dropped the needle and was hit with a really killer, current take on the UNIFORM CHOICE sound I was really stoked. At times the lyrics are even so close to direct UxCx lines that it could read as just a tribute but I'm convinced that it's certainly more than that. You can tell that a lot of time and energy was spent on these songs and there's heart behind it, for sure, and it shows in the end result. What's most refreshing is to hear a record that lands so close to what is usually just lumped into the youth crew camp that doesn't need mosh parts to make a point. Bravo. This one's a keeper for sure. (JU)
(Not Like You)

**MOMMY – "I Remember Them" EP**

MOMMY is completely fucked punk damage from NYC and the latest in Toxic State's string of winners. Nothing traditional about this lot, but the noise is immediately relatable and the tortured subject matter splattered across every tune goes for the gut and hits directly. The all-bass attack recalls LITTLE QUEENIE, though the noise and wretched vibe/sound of it all make this heavy in its own unique way. Buying my own copy right now. (MC)
(Toxic State)

**MOSS LIME – "Chou Frise" 10"**

Cool spare post-punk girlsound that evokes KLANG, HOUSEHOLD, *154*-era WIRE and YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS. This band is really assured and otherworldly. They are also playful and surreal in a manner that reminds of listening to the ROSA YEMEN 12" and the Y-PANTS 45 at the same time! It has an almost thrown out in an afternoon appeal, lazy bedroom sounds with really dreamy oozy French vocals. If you are into cool, slinky yet goofy female experimental takes on the punk ideal you should definitely invest. I think MOSS LIME is based in Paris *and* Montreal, not sure how that works, but I hope they make more records like this one and come and play San Francisco ASAP! (LG)
(Telephone Explosion)

**MUCH WORSE – "Chronic Instigation" LP**

Fourth record and second LP by these cretins from the Twin Cities, and while they have yet to match the sonic power of their two EPs, this LP is considerably better than their last, which had a similar sound but was just OK. Here they keep the scathing Japanese hardcore meets USHC fusion. There's plenty of technical and frantic guitar work along with the singer's killer sinister vocals. Subtle dissonant rock elements are introduced at times, including some late BLACK FLAG nods in some of the riff-writing and repeating. Things get a little, but not too, somber towards the end of the record, and it ends on a high note. If you like their earlier 7"s, this is worth picking up. (DG)
(25 Diamonds)

**NERVOUS TREND – "Shattered/Decency"**

An exciting new single of Australian post-punk here. "Decency" fires off with a blistering rhythm, like Penny Rimbaud on speed, spastic while totally in control. Their sound recalls some of the best attributes of SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES, but not because of the vocals (for once!). Icy guitars, rolling bass, and a soulful vocal delivery do well to match the extraordinary level of drumming on here. Both songs swell and rise, without going on too long, in a way that transcends any traditional verse-chorus-bridge structure. They've already got a demo out, so I'm going to go visit that now, while I strongly advise you check out this single now if you're a fan of the aforementioned sounds. (MA)
(Black Wire / Residue / Schwarma)

**NO NEGATIVE – "The Good Never Comes" LP**

A heady excursion into a bizzaro world of latter-day psych/garage/punk, listening to NO NEGATIVE recalls the blissful confusion of getting stoned for the first time, with tasty retro electronic bleepy-bloopy thrown in to help you reach further into the back of your melting skull. From the hip-shaking go-go swerve of "Eternal Crypt" to skronky dirgeism on "Feel It" and "Trouble," these power trippers manage to touch on a wide range of spaced-out moods without losing that ever-crucial sense of psychedelic cohesion. I mean it as a *huge* compliment when I say that some of this had me thinking of Hamilton's legendarily warped SIMPLY SAUCER. There are some duds in the bunch, I'll admit, but that's easily forgiven when the rest of this is so thoroughly on point. Freek out! (WB)
(Psychic Handshake / Swollen City)

**NOUN – "Throw Your Body On the Gears and Stop The Machine With Your Blood" LP**

So while NOUN is the solo project of Marissa from SCREAMING FEMALES, this record bears absolutely no resemblance to that band whatsoever. If you had to put it in a genre, "goth dance" might be the most appropriate. All the drumming is programmed and there's lots of synth, but the outcome is eerily magical. Simultaneously dark, haunting, and infectious. For all of you who would be intrigued if GRIMES announced that her next album would be a personal tribute to SIOUXSIE: this is your record. And while it might be a stretch to call this a punk record, it certainly falls somewhere on the bridge that fills the gap between punk and electronica. But either way, it's a beautiful record that only gets better the more you listen to it. (FS)
(Don Giovanni)

**OUTTA SORTS – "Good With Bad Habits" EP**

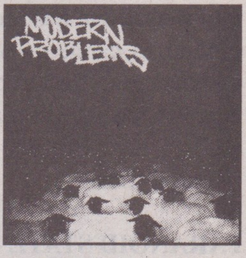
The cover on this thing is absolutely commercial suicide. That shitty font...it just *screams* dollar bin. Which is a fucking shame, because the record inside is some damn fine garage punk, heavy on the '66 vibe without being 100% "German slobbering tribute recreation," if you get my drift. They are a garage band that leans on the classics without just hiding inside of the safety zone, and these guys actually got some decent production. It's a disc that needs a buttwipe zerox sleeve to get the respect it deserves, so toss it and make your own. (RW)
(Plaza Eight)

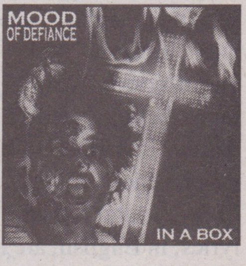
**PAINTED ZEROS – "Floriography" LP**

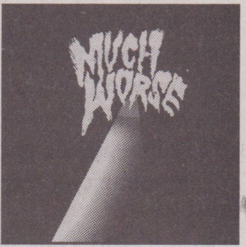
This is a great album of lush, dense, heartfelt, and personal indie / dream pop. Everything on here was written, recorded, and performed by Katie Lau, who lets her breathy vocals lazily and comfortingly fall over each song like your favorite blanket. "Spring" is a standout. It sounds like it was written on and never meant to leave a sprawling front porch in the afternoon heat. The other songs use strings and other instrumentation to give each moment extremely nuanced dynamics. An album of this caliber takes time and effort. It sounds like it was time well spent. (GH)
(Don Giovanni)

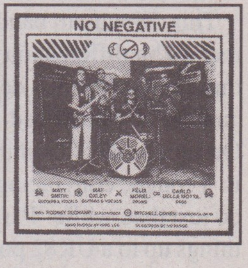
**PARANOID – "Satyagraha" LP**

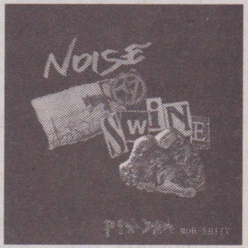
If it's a concentrated sonic punishment you seek, look no further. *Satyagraha* is a necessary amendment to the *How to Insert an Atmosphere of Uncertainty and Dread in Recorded Music* Handbook, from the industrialized cacophony of the intro all the way through to the organ-driven funeral dirge at the end of the record. A level of ferocious noise that was last seen on the KRIEGSHÖG LP, and the first FRAMTID LP before that. Like a glistening chrome Machiavellian hammer of noise smashing its way through a mesa of bland tan rock, PARANOID breathes life, context, and craft back

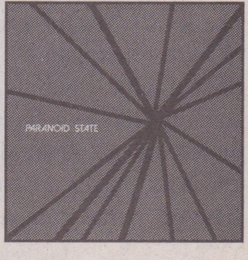






into a style that has seemingly been losing ground to careless hacks, sameness, and colonization. Best record of 2015 but I heard it too late to make my official list. (JU)
(Konton Crasher)

**PARANOID STATE – LP**

This Dutch trio has a hard charging, rough-voiced approach. The guitar is what sets them apart—wavering, squally riffs with intricate parts seamlessly worked in. Of course, 45rpm makes it sound that much better. I had to play it a few times before I started to hear the songs, and despite the yell-along choruses, it's more of a "sound" than "song" album. The lyrics, in English, are mostly in a personal/emotional style, regarding lost friends, frustrations, and choices that limit one's options. Even "Down In Flames," a mid-tempo, melancholy number regarding some shit in society, is pretty vague as to what the problem is. This is worth checking out, and I dig what the guitarist is doing, but it doesn't quite climb to the top of the heap. (JM)
(Darcy Trash / Gummopunx)

**PARASYTES – "Straight Jacket" EP**

This Montreal band has a cool sound that's a bit different on each of this record's three songs, but it's defined by its metallic and slightly reverbed UK punk elements. On the A-side, "Burning Down the Cities" is a tough, convincing, mid-paced call to do just that, while "Paranoid Visions" takes things up to a UK82 pogo pace. The second side has the standout, "Frantic," which is bookended by anthemic mid-paced riffing complete with flanger and what sounds like tape manipulation and faster pounding in the middle. Would be very curious to see what their live set is like. (DG)
(Distort Reality)

**PIG DNA – "Mob Shity" LP**

A couple years ago, after mentioning that PIG DNA was one of best bands I had seen in ages, a friend asked, "what are they like live?" "Well," I said, "They are kind of hard to explain..." The drummer plays these frantic rhythms that come close to sounding like a bunch of garbage cans being hurled down a flight of stairs. The guitarist and bass player appear to be locked in a state of mortal combat, flailing around in a haze of ecstatic feedback and noise. *And,* while all of this is happening, a vocalist, leather gloves gripping the mic, moves very slowly through the crowd projecting a look of absolute disgust as she wretches forth utter lyrical disdain. This record is a variation of all that and more sealed in a piece of wax that you can play over and over again. Highly recommended. (JK)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

**POSERS – "Coppin' in Camden" EP**

The first three songs—"Better Future," "Posers," and "Coppin' in Camden"—are obnoxiously slick and snappy high energy pop punk with a smidgen of late '70s punk; think the AVENGERS and the NUNS. Vocals are cheeky and over enunciated, uncomfortably so, and punctuated by catchy pop punk riffs with the occasional "woah-oh-oh" gang vocals. And although the guitar is skillful with shred-tastic fills, I found it at times predictable. "Nothing" is the least terrible of the bunch, probably because after listening to the first three songs I needed to hear some scream to scum it up. (CR)
(Low Level)

**PSYCHO SIN – "Forward To The Caves!" LP + CD**

Finally giving a dedicated listen to this fairly infamous slab (see *Shit-Fi*'s praise), now reissued for a new generation to puzzle and potentially hate. For those unaware, this is Primitive Shit Music ran through '80s hardcore punk. Assuming you're the type of person who can recognize true artistic beauty in something so intellectually, visually and sonically shitty, *Forward To The Caves* will have you marveling at how it was even possible to cobble together such a purely ridiculous and totally effective punk statement. I will say that I flat-out love "Wall St." and "Once I Was..." though. The accompanying CD contains 73 (!!!!) Psycho Sin tunes for the brave to pore over as well. Awesome reissue! (MC)
(General Speech)

**THE PSYCLOCKS – "Don't Think, Feeeel!!!!!!!! EP**

Is psychobilly fun for anyone other than the people playing it? I'll indulge Japan's PSYCLOCKS for the four tunes here, but it's not looking pretty. Total genre-exercise territory: nothing noteworthy in their writing or delivery, just hairdos and odes to zombies. I will say I find the sleeve (including inner) confused and ridiculous enough to warrant a positive mention. But the actual meat here blows. (MC)
(Killjoy)

**RATS IN THE LOUVRE – LP**

On the surface, this sounds a lot like SLEATER-KINNEY. Most of that comparison is based on the vocals and the songwriting—pretty driving punk but sort of rock at the same time. It's definitely something that would appeal to fans of that '90s Northwest punk that verges on indie rock. Digging a little deeper, the heavy bass presence and the bit of reverb on the guitar gives the songs a darker feel that might appeal to folks who are into the dark wave resurgence in punk (or is that over?). It's a short record and the songwriting is certainly good enough to keep it interesting throughout. (PA)
(Water Under the Bridge)

**THE REALITY SHOW – "Vicious Cycle of Life" EP**

Burly hardcore from Finland, the order of the day is chug-a-lug metallic riffing and vocals that split the difference between tough guy and metal-crust, complemented by soooooaring leads, NYHC-influenced breakdowns, and the occasional total thrash-out. Some of the slower stuff would make a solid weightlifting soundtrack for those so inclined, but I'd look elsewhere as far as cardio is concerned. (WB)
(Doomed to Misery / Eternal Now / Filthy Rat / Räkälevyt)

**RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS – "Time to Let Her Go/I Wanna Destroy You"**

The A-side is a super catchy, up-tempo punk rock original. It's short, it's sharp, and it's to the point. The point is that it's time let her go. My guess is that there are any number of you out there who could stand to take this advice. That said, if you like catchy and up-beat traditional punk rock, this should scratch an itch for you. Before I even listen to the B-side, a cover of the SOFT BOYS' classic, I have to caution that this is dicey territory. What could you possibly do to this song to make it better? It's a trick question; you can't make it better. I suppose you could make

it your own. I suppose. I mean, maybe. You have to give them credit for trying. Let's have a listen. Yeah, I was right. They kind of make it their own, but I'm not sure they do anything to it that makes me totally excited that they've put it down on vinyl. Please keep it in the live set rotation. The A-side is excellent. The B-side is good, but sort of lacks a purpose. All that said, I'm going to go find myself a copy. (KK)
(End Sounds)

**ROTTEN UK – "Back to War" EP**
UK82 not from the UK and in '16. The catchy and mid-tempo "Back to War" could fool any punker with modest knowledge of the era if it was slipped onto a mix tape between ANTI-SYSTEM and MAYHEM. "The End of It All" is D-beat-driven, and more forgettable in my opinion. Maybe the sort of narrow production detracts from its potential ferocity. The third track is a Charles Hamilton Sorely poem forcefully spoken over a windy and droning soundscape, which might sound out of place if you're not familiar with many of the anarcho-punk records from the early '80s. I think it's pretty cool! Overall, though, I'm not totally sold on this. So much empty wax! (MA)
(Byllepest)

**SCUMRISE! – "Stains" EP**
Vocals completely take over right out of the gate, and not in a good way. Overbearing metalcore and Anselmo yowls and screams make it hard to even focus on the fast metallic hardcore…but the hardcore eventually comes through and you're left with two tracks of plodding rudimentary modern HC that's dressed up in the studio to sound chaotic and wild…and then you flip the record. "Drinking with the King" is like some melodic version of the A-side but with a rock 'n' roll swagger that is completely destroyed by the vocals (those weird inhaling pig grunts on top of melodic choruses sweetly singing the title repeatedly…total fail)—my apologies to the vocalist here, but I just can't help but think he's in the wrong band. I actually feel bad for disliking this as much as I do and I looked for some kind of merit…I came up empty. (WN)
(self-released)

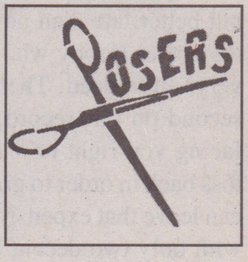
**SEXLESS – "Don't Stray" EP**
What year is this? This sounds like it came straight out of the early '90s when rock bands were kinda grunge but also trying to sound like high-energy versions of '70s rock bands like BUDGIE and SABBATH. It reminds me of MENSCLUB. These mustachioed longhairs swill some PBR while singing "Hey babe" style lyrics over some goddamned rock and fucking roll. The B-side is an instrumental, which is a weird choice for this style of band on such a short record, but it ain't bad. Is this your kind of thing? It sure as fuck isn't mine, but this is a pretty good record. (GH)
(Resurrection)

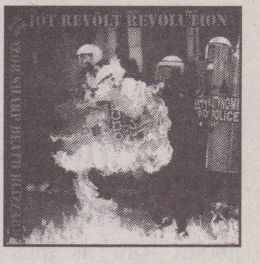
**THE SICK LIVERS – "Mid Liver Crisis" LP**
This Welsh band's devotion to the terrible tenants of Rawk is almost endearing, but that passes after half of a single tune here. It's all flaming dice, big riffs, cum-encrusted denim and very little actual punk. Terrible. (MC)
(Baldy Longhair Records / Glunk)

**SILENT ORDER – "Distraction" EP**
Heavy black-metal-influenced crust from up Canada way, not dissimilar to what Sweden's PARANOID are up to these days, though more overtly metal. The intense, desperate vocals, drenched in reverb, are a highlight especially as the rest of the execution comes off a bit mechanical. The drums in particular sound kind of canned and possibly even trigged. This sounds like a band that consists of punks who are listening to a lot more metal than punk these days. A little more G.I.S.M. and a little less IMMORTAL in the mix would be a huge improvement, but as it stands this record will definitely delight anybody whose vest has room for both DISRUPT and DARKTHRONE. (AU)
(Konton Crasher)

**SPENT IDOLS – "Land Of The Lost" CD**
These guys have been around since the '90s, although there have been periods of inactivity. This is their first album in eighteen years, and it is released by a longtime fan. I'm not sure if they've played live much since the '90s. They've always gone for a classic VIBRATORS look à la the BRIEFS. Sound wise too, as they do the raw punk rock'n'roll thing. I'm thinking more fun in a bar than vital to a punk mixtape. A few covers from the STOOGES, the PROFESSIONALS, and the VIBRATORS here as well that have a *Live At The Roxy* charm. Kinda cool. (RL)
(Rawkunroll Records/Spentcity Records)

**STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS – "Grave City" LP**
I think I can safely speak for any number of chin-strokers, wall-proppers, helicopter-ists, stunt doubles, and bottle recyclers if I opine that Bobby Soxx was *thee* quintessential punk vocalist, the absolute exemplar of what qualifies to fill that mold with all the terror, disgust, anxiety, frustration, and seething intelligence that inhabits the idealistic maniac who possesses the existential ability to speak on behalf of a genuine punk band. What if the *other* Bobby, Darby Crash, fronted FLIPPER,



say? But only after he somehow survived his overdose, escaped from the hospital by riding a corpse's intestines as a rope out the window, then walked barefoot through the desert to Texas wearing only his hospital gown. You get the basic thrust of STICK MEN WITH RAYGUNS, one of the premier punk bands of the early '80s. They had to wait 'til 2016 to get the best Texas punk LP of all time finally released; but better late than never, well, except for the actual Bobby who is (also) extremely, very, quite dead. There is not one boring second on this record, so the only choice facing you right now is what you have to toss back in order to grab this. Yes, *yes*, you can leave that expensive power pop reissue with only two decent fucking songs on it, this is going to scald a ring impression onto your stereo after one play. Cough. It's a thumbs-up from *MRR*. Go scavenge some death. (RW)
(End Of An Ear)

**SUFFER THE PAIN – "Midnight Sacrifice" LP**

This is exactly what I'm fucking talking about! Raw as fuck proto black metal, thrash destruction. Sounds like these Swedish crusties got stuck in a frozen cave and had only CELTIC FROST, POSSESSED, and VENOM to keep them warm. These guys crush it from beginning to end. They even throw in cheesy nursery rhyme parts that normally would be totally lame, but the rock does not stop. This one is a guaranteed good time for crust rockers of all stripes. (BA)
(Phobia)

**TENEMENT – "The Blind Wink" LP**

It says something that this album is being repressed after two initial pressings in 2011 that added up to over 1,000 records. It's nuts that TENEMENT has had a singles collection, a double LP, and now a repress in just the last year, but there's a market for it—people love this band. *The Blind Wink* is ambitious for a DIY album. It makes sense that TENEMENT would go on to be the type of band to put out a double LP and start a country band side project (DUSK); the foundation for all that is here, distilled and concise. The band works through DESCENDENTS-style pop punk (their trademark), but go in for groovier power pop and acoustic ballads as well. I hear BIG STAR on a lot of tracks, with less inclination towards punk and more towards hard rocking power pop coupled up against tracks that rely on piano and Wurlitzer. Buy it while you can. If your curiosity for TENEMENT ended when you couldn't hold it down through all 25 tracks of *Predatory Headlights*, give *The Blind Wink* a try. (BW)
(Deranged)

**TERMINAL NATION – "Absent" EP**

Burly hardcore from a label that has put out some of the most mind-altering powerviolence every released. TERMINAL NATION lives somewhere between the brevity of the REPOS (the vocalist has the same gravely delivery) and MINDLESS MUTANT's musicality. Not quite PV, all hardcore, this record destroys. For fans of: the sound boots make in freshly fallen snow, Carhartt jackets that are way too big, fresh squeezed lemonade. (MW)
(Deep Six)

**TØRSÖ – "Sono Pronta a Morire" LP**

Fueled by bananas, TØRSÖ sounds damn good on their first LP. They opt for a powerful, steady D-beat gallop, carried by the solid as hell drumming and great recording that's relatively clean for the style but still punk-sounding. The opening riff of "You Stay On That High Horse" is the high point of this record, and the riff-writing in general is good if not great. The songs do start to get indistinguishable by the end of the first side, though the overall power carries everything all the way through. Ethan's discontent can be felt in the vocal delivery, and her words are worth poring over, which is far more than I can say about most hardcore band's lyrics. Get this, like this, and see them on tour later this year. (DG)
(Sorry State)

**TOZCOS – "Existencia Aturdida" EP**

Fuck, this is an easy one. TOZCOS rip it up again with their Oi!-tinged hard punk, featuring fierce lady vocals and driven by fast melodic bass lines and pogo beats. Throw BLITZ, the PARTISANS and ESKORBUTO in a blender with a pinch of '80s USHC, and a TOZCOS cocktail will emerge. The simple but eye-catching graphic design is the icing on the cake. I could write 300 words about how great this band is, but all you need to know is this: if you have a chance to pick up this record, or especially to see this band live, you owe it to yourself as a punk to do so. (AU)
(Verdugo)

**TRADITIONAL FOOLS – "Fools Gold" LP**

This is one of those records that you probably already know if you need or not…A collection of mostly unreleased odds and ends from these SF by way of Laguna Beach punkers, proponents of true primitive garage snarl put across with a smile and a good intention. The result is total gassed in the garage ruckus for fans of ye olde surf/frat house dance off groups like the WAILERS or the AARDVARKS, with a nod and a wink to some CHILDISH / GORIES / MUMMIES '90s evocations. Emphasis on the ferocious and the falling apart! I really took this band for granted when they existed; I saw them play a ton yet don't own any of their records for some stupid reason. It was an era of SF when the rent was still relatively cheap and there were house shows all over the city. Nothing seemed amazing or earth shattering about this time whilst I was existing in it, but looking back it's clear it was the beginning of the end of something. There are a million articles about how boring and tame culturally San Francisco is nowadays, but listening to this record I am reminded of the kicks that were once had with this crew and their compatriots, who all seemed to move here at once from Southern California in a swarm of energy and good times. One time when the *MRR* truck broke down, they gave us a ride to the bulk mail post office in a car that was like something O.C. and Stiggs would have driven with added Da Cat Malibu-isms. Personal anecdotes aside, this record rules, captures the wild anarchic kicks inherent at most TRAD FOOLS shows—even the covers set at the end is a good time! I know fans have been waiting for it to come out for a few years now, and I can assure you it was worth the wait. (LG)
(In the Red)

**TURKISH TECHNO – "Number Two" LP**

More feel good dude party jams but with a pinch more love of pop punk than I'm accustomed to hearing in this genre. It's never easy for me to get into these bands...

the music always sounds super tight, but not in an intense way, the politics are always incredibly shy of getting totally pissed, and it's pretty paint by numbers. I should get off of my high horse, but it's just so nice up here. They do a CURE cover, and by their lyrics, I bet we could tip back a few and get wild. Wild for bros, I guess. (DZ)
(Dirt Cult)

**THE UGLY – "Off The Hook/Screw the System" EP**

Maybe y'all heard of Canada's the UGLY? '70s Toronto punks who would probably be way more legendary if their raero 1978 single wasn't so pussed out. Here they are trying to redeem their legacy almost 40 years later with a newly recorded two-sider including their "Screw The System," which was written back then, plus a pretty raging STONES cover. I'm sad their original chune wasn't a bit longer since both song and recording are ripping, but their singer's long deceased, so I'm not sure what I'm entitled to ask for. Definitely puts the '78 single to shame, which is a real surprise, because often these rehash type releases sound like canned bar band trash. Limited to 480 copies with sick red and white and black cover plus insert. (GB)
(Ugly Pop)

**UNKNOWN TO GOD – "Unbearable Trauma and Grief" EP**

This is some very raw D-beat out of Australia. Sounds like a fight between a chainsaw and a jackhammer. The guitar is so piercing I thought I had the record on the wrong speed for a second. Add in the heavily echoed out vocals, and it all comes crumbling down. Hella sick! Kind of like if FINAL CONFLICT had the extra-harsh tone of DISCLOSE. Order this one with extra bread so you can soak up the blood. (BA)
(Konton Crasher)

**WHATEVER BRAINS – "Punk" LP**

Can you spell a-r-t f-u-c-k? The jacket's ASCII declaration of "PUNK" only begins to hint at WHATEVER BRAINS' mask of ironic detachment, a self-consciously quirky sensibility that is far from the only thing linking this record to the ur-nerd legacy of DEVO and RESIDENTS. Drifting further and further away from the guitar rock basis of their previous albums in favor of whirling bitcrushed electronics and strangely danceable drum loops, this is music to twitch and nod along to, a paranoid uncanny valley of cyborg sensitivities. Alternating between upbeat near-pop and lurching long-form meanderings, the album culminates in the droning pulse of "Silt", an eight-minute-plus epic complete punctuated by weaponized synth lasers and PERE UBU saxophone trills. If the band is to be believed, this is to be their final recorded effort, and no one will question that they are going out on their own highly idiosyncratic terms. Not an album I'll be putting on every day, this is easily one of the more interesting puzzles I've come across. But is there a solution? (WB)
(Sorry State)

**WHATEVER BRAINS – "An Object/My Autumn's Done Come"**

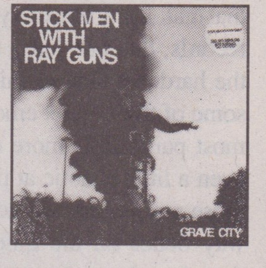
WHATEVER BRAINS have gone all-out on this single. The A-side sounds like late-era SWIRLIES, down to the shit-fi coda of this track, and the teasing vocals get layered over junked ring mod effects. The drums on this track sound like tuning into KMEL (the Bay Area's #1 in hip-hop and R&B) from a nuclear fallout shelter half a mile underground, but it's after 2:00 AM on a weekend when they're playing reggaeton and dancehall. I'm imagining a garage somewhere in North Carolina with a big modular synth collection of dubious origin or STEREOLAB's van breaking down next to a punk diner in the American South. Fans of current sounds from SPRAY PAINT or PATOIS COUNSELORS will probably like this as much as I do. (EW)
(Sorry State)

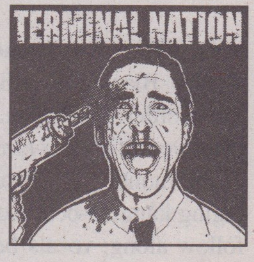
**WHITE MURDER – "Form Early" LP**

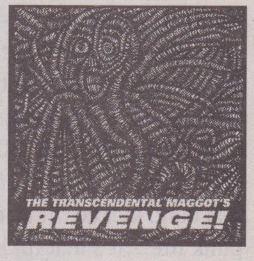
It's my understanding that *Form Early* is WHITE MURDER's last album? I hope it's a nasty little rumor, because it would be a shame. What has always struck me as more genius then novelty are WHITE MURDER'S vocals. Hannah Blumenfeld and Mary Animal's vocals are sung in complete unison and have serious bite. Sounds like a sly inquisitive smile with the bearing and gnashing of teeth. More in tune with LE TIGRE Kathleen Hanna than BIKINI KILL, the vocals are contained but still brash with frustration and desire. This serves as nice juxtaposition with Reuben's guitar, which has a dark, thick sound that's unapologetically rough and imperfect. Melodies are slightly odd and dark, teetering on a post-punk edge with new wave-y guitar fills. This all plays against plenty of high energy, mid-tempo, and floor tom heavy beats. The melodies of "Feminist Rag" and "Fury of a Morbid Principle" are bizarre but compelling, and "Middle Class" and "Ursula" are full of anxious righteousness. "Place your Bets" has a dark drone and a contagious throb, and "Roosevelt" is just plain delicious. (CR)
(Razorcake / Recess)

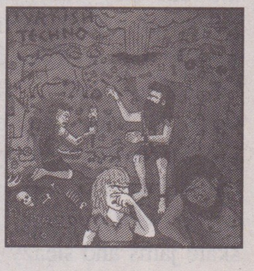
**WHY+THE+WIRES – "Flame Failures" LP**

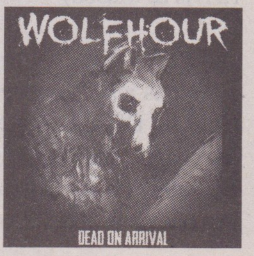
On this, their third record, WHY+THE+WIRES continue to play saxophone laden, gruff vocaled post-hardcore that's a bit mathy and sounds somewhere between D.C. and Chicago (like maybe Louisville, if







that makes any sense to you). Unlike previous records, this one leans a little more toward the hardcore side of things. They still have some of those quiet emoish parts but for the most part this is more driving and heavier, even a little chaotic at times. Unfortunately, those saxophone and accordion parts sound way better on the quiet meandering parts than they do on the hardcore parts. (PA)
(Jetsam Flotsam / One Percent Press)

**WOLFHOUR – "Dead On Arrival" LP**
Yep. Blazing Swedish hardcore of the finest order, thank you. Don't expect some contrived distort-o-rama or some flavor-of-the-month ____-worship—this is pure, raging kång. D-beats so fast you can hardly follow along, vocals belted out in an ever-predictable meter and manner, and riffs for fukkn *days*. The guitar leads are there but they are simple and to-the-point, and when they slow the pace ever so slightly for "War and Torture," you might as well quit punk. How good is this? Reminds me of the first time Ken played me SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS well over a decade ago, and that band kicked off an entire segment of my punk life…it's that fukkn good. (WN)
(Global Resistance / Kibou)

**ZEN LUNATICS – "Sacred Mountain Blues" 12"**
Ripping fastcore with gratuitous rock'n'roll riffing. Massive production, what appears to be a healthy amount of alcohol…and a love song dedicated to the normal girl who works at the convenience store. These Japanese dudes (with a token *gaijin*, apparently) seem keen to do whatever the fukk they want—hardcore, mosh, party punk, filthy rock 'n' roll, crossover—and they do it all with precision and confidence. On the down side, ZEN LUNATICS don't seem to take themselves too seriously, but, on the upside, they don't seem to take themselves too seriously. There's nothing wrong with merging fast hardcore, catchy skate jams and sleazy rock, as long as you do it right. (WN)
(Divis & Mason)

**ZIPPER – LP**
This is a 40th anniversary reissue of Fred Cole of DEAD MOON fame's '70s hard rock rager, and it killlllls. Shed your spikey hair and fire up that ceramic skull bong—the one with the snake wrapped around it. You're in for a primer-coated muscle car journey to Hades, spinning donuts across the river Styx all the way. There's something about Mr. Cole's voice that can send shivers up your hunched spine. Sure, there's some hokey ballads, but tracks like the ZEPPELIN fueled opener "Bullets" will make you scream with dirtheaded, orgasmic glory. "Face Of Stone" definitely shows signs of DEAD MOONish things to come, but this is straight up zucchini-in-tight-jeans cock rock with a capital K, and I just can't get enough. (RO)
(Permanent)

**V/A – "Ritmo Selvagem" EP**
This EP has four current Brazilian bands covering four '60s Brazilian bands. The style is called "*iê-iê-iê*" (Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!) which is how '60s garage bands from Brazil are referred to. The bands on this EP are the RENEGADES OF PUNK, ORNITORRINCOS, FUTURO, and MAHATMA GANGUE. None of the bands have a '60s garage feel to them, per se. There is some punky-ness combined with an '80s college rock feel. Combine that with some great songs, and it sounds really good. *Ritmo selvagem* means "wild pace" in Portuguese, and this lives up to the title. It's a very cool record. (CK)
(Yeah You!)

**V/A – "Sick of Thing the Way They Are" EP**
This compilation starts out with WOKLING, a raspy, spastic, punk noise attack followed by WOUND MAN, a heavy hardcore rock trudging. FUCKING INVISIBLE screams it's way in at a similarly doomed pace and surprisingly blasts off with sharp hatred. Rounding out the side is SYMPTOM, one of my favorite live sets last year. A D-beat chainsaw killer. Side B has got SOME NERVE, a gasping hard mosh beatdown jam, then WORLD OF SHIT shows us how horrifying a grindcore death can sound. Last but not least, RAZORHEADS bombs the shit out of everything with primitive pogo rawness. An excellent little sampler with variety, albeit the heavier spectrum of punk, on thick pea soup colored vinyl. (JR)
(Atomic Action)

**V/A – "The Transcendental Maggot's Revenge!" EP**
I can't determine what, if any, common factor there is between CLASS HOLE, BEIGE EAGLE BOYS, TOE TAG, FLAG OF DEMOCRACY, and UGLY AMERICANS, other than that they all appear on this 7" comp. Except for maybe *Drinking Is Great*, virtually every 7" punk comp ever is throwaway, and this one is no exception. CLASSHOLE needs no further elaboration than "bad punk." BEIGE EAGLE BOYS is wavy, disconnected garage vocals over scuzzy scumpunk guitars and a few psychedelic touches. TOE TAG is a newer band fronted by Blaine Cook from the FARTZ and the ACCUSED. While he still has it vocally, and this isn't too far off from the FARTZ' *Injustice* record, it's not memorable. Same with FLAG OF DEMOCRACY; they have oodles of better songs. UGLY AMERICANS contribute the best song: a clever pop rock number about not getting all the toys one wanted as a child. They undoubtedly would've opened for the FASTBACKS or FLOP or been in the movie *Hype!* had they been from Seattle 25 years ago, but not even their song is enough to save this comp. (DG)
(Tsuguri)

**V/A – "Without Kibou There Is Nothing Vol. 4" EP**
Here we are, finally, at the end of the Kibou compilation EP reign of terror. More pixelated art that nobody could possibly like, and once again a mixed bag of bands involved, a few of which were so bad that I couldn't finish the track. This time the clear standout is the excellent ACTIVE MINDS track; they're easily the first band to appear on one of these comps that made me think "these guys are totally slumming it just showing up on this thing," VIOLATION's charmingly out-of-tune '90s New York pogo track was pretty OK, DIS-TANK is growing on me with their distorted take on D-beat, and maybe the sleeper of the bunch is the bafflingly noizy POGO ASSAULT track, which seemingly owes more to the BRAIN GENOCIDE / P.P.S.H. split than anything that came out of the UK in '82. I'd love to hear more from them to see if everything they do is this chaotic and distorted. Everything else is pretty crummy. (AU)
(Kibou)

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**25 Diamonds:** 25diamonds.com
**Adactive**: facebook.com/adactaband
**Anti-Authority Records**: AntiAuthorityRecords.com
**Artcore:** artcorefanzine.co.uk
**Black Gladiator / Slovenly:** slovenly.com
**Brain Transplant:** btxrex@gmail.com
**Brisk Range Rejects:** c/o Jordan Kotztan, 872 Monroe Ct., Saint Paul, MN 55102
**Brutal Panda Records:** brutalpandarecords.com
**Byllepest:** atomkraft@gateavisa.no
**Crasher**: kontoncrasher.storenvy.com
**Darcy Trash:** darcytrashrecords@gmail.com
**Dead Clones:** facebook.com/deadclones
**Deep Six**: deepsixrecords.com
**Deranged:** 2700 Lower Road, Roberts Creek, BC V0N 2W4 CANADA, derangedrecords.com
**Dirt Cult:** dirtcultrecords.com
**Disculpe:** disculpe.bandcamp.com
**Distort Reality:** distortreality.storenvy.com
**Dogteeth:** thedogteeth.bandcamp.com
**Doomed to Misery:** doomedtomisery.blogspot.fi, doomedtomisery@gmail.com
**End Of An Ear:** endofanear.com
**End Sounds:** PO Box 684743, Austin, TX 78768; endounds.com
**Eternal Now:** no info
**Exabrupto:** A.P. 1375, C.P. 64001, Monterrey, N.L. MÉXICO, exabrupto80@hotmail.com
**F Fud:** ffudrecords.blogspot.com
**Filthy Rat:** filthyratrecords.blogspot.fi, filthyratrecords@gmail.com
**Forum Absurdum**: forumabsurdum.sk
**Fränkische Schallplattenindustrie**: Else Admire, Lichtenhaiderstr. 3, 96052, Bamburg, GERMANY, elseadmire@web.de
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**General Speech:** generalspeech.com
**Global Resistance:** facebook.com/Refuse.Resist
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**Haluzeum Produkt**: facebook.com/haluzeum.produkt
**Hate Ape Productions:** skrupel@web.de, hate-ape.blogspot.com,
**Headcheck**: headcheckrecords.co.uk
**Heavy Metal Vomit Party**: hmvp.eu
**Hello:** jsteinh@gmail.com
**Hound Gawd:** houndgawd.com
**Humaniterrorist:** humaniterrorist.com
**Ingot Andejco**: Andrej.masaker.sk
**Intensive Care:** intensivecare.bandcamp.com
**Iscollagecollective**: iscollagecollective.org
**JT Classics**: jtclassics.co.uk
**Kibou:** kibourecords.bigcartel.com
**Knife Hits:** knifehitscollective.bandcamp.com
**Konton Crasher:** PO Box 393, Lakewood, OH 44107, kontoncrasher.blogspot.com
**Low Level:** weareposers.bandcamp
**Not Like You:** 102 Richmond Ave. SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106, notlikeyourecords.com
**Not Very Nice:** notverynice.storenvy.com
**Off Label:** offlabelrecords.de
**Outta Sorts:** the outtasorts@gmail.com
**Papagájův Hlasatel:** phr.cz
**Pau Wau Records:** pauwaurecords.com
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**Psychic Handshake:** 216, Rue St. Philippe, Montréal QC, H4C 2V1, CANADA, graeme@psychichandshake.com,
**Räkälevyt:** diyturku.net/rakalevyt, rakalevyt@gmail.com
**Rawkunroll Records**: rawkunroll.blogspot.com
**Razorcake:** PO Box 42129, Los Angeles, CA 90042
**Recess:** PO Box 1666, San Pedro, CA 90733, recessrecords.com
**Residue:** residue-records.com
**Resurrection:** Getresurrected.com
**RSR:** hate-ape.blogspot.com, rsrec.bigcartel.com, skrupel@web.de
**S-S:** ss-records-sol-re-sol-records.myshopify.com
**Scumrise:** scumrise.bandcamp.com
**Seminal Recordz:** artificial.dissemination2@gmail.com
**Sentimientos de Lucha:** c/o Luis Pérez Arello, Sta. Margarita 556, Col. Sta. María, C.P. 36640, Irapuato, GTO, MÉXICO; kontradiccion@hotmail.com
**Sorry State:** 317 W Morgan St #105, Raleigh, NC 27601, sorrystaterecords.com
**Sovoboda**: sovboda-records.fr
**Spent Idols Official**: facebook.com/thespentidols
**Swollen City:** swollencityrecords.bandcamp.com
**Svart:** svartrecords.com
**To Live A Lie:** c/o Will Butler, 2825 Van Dyke Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27607-7021, info@tolivealie.com
**Too Circle:** c/o Hi-home Kodaira 510, Nakamachi 221-3 Kodaira-City Tokyo, 187-0042, JAPAN; toocircle.thebase.in
**Totalitarianism Still Continues**: label.punkgen.sk
**Tsuguri:** tsugurirecords.blogspot.com
**Ugly Pop Records:** uglypop.bigcartel.com
**Verdugo:** verdugodiscos.storenvy.com
**Veva**: veva_records.punk@seznam.cz
**Vinyl Rites:** vinylrites.net
**Wahnfried**: wahnfriedrecords.blogspot.com
**Yeah You!**: PO Box 163, Porto Alegre/RS, 90001-970, BRAZIL, yeahyourecords.bigcartel.com
**Zen Lunatics:** zenlunatics.bandcamp.com, zenlunaticsband@gmail.com

# DEMOS

Send cassettes and CD-Rs to: MRR Attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. CD-Rs with no artwork will not be considered. Reviews by Matt Badenhop, Robert Collins, Michael de Toffoli, Greg Harvester, Mike Leslie, Sean Nieves-Quiñones, and Jason Ryan.

**AGATA** – *Horror Stories* – How many people will get excited if I say that Oakland's AGATA are like a modern amalgamation of MENSCLUB and MDC? I'm guessing less than five…but those five people will be fukkn juiced when they hear this shit. The rest of you? This is aggressive and (regrettably?) groovy hard-hitting punk that has perhaps landed a decade too late. The tracks are heavy and the licks are legit, whether or not you care is up to you…Young Punk: are you up for the challenge? (Robert) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, agataindustries.com, agatainductries.bandcamp.com)

**ANDY PLACE AND THE COOLHEADS** – Portland indie-punk with fun banger hooks and solid, confident songwriting. Punchy guitars that sound like they're having so much fun you can almost hear them smiling on the tape. At times even a melodica sneaks in to solidify the chill party-of-the-year vibe. Most of the songs are about the COOLHEADS, his band, his friends, and all the good people in his life. He seems like the fun, popular, cool dude at the party that all your friends know, and he's really stoked to finally meet you. (Michael) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, andyplaceandthecoolheads@gmail.com, coolheads.bandcamp.com)

**ANIMAL PLANET** – *I'm Not As Stupid As I Seem* – Super weird sounding guitars that are half bedroom drum machine hardcore and half over-reverbed retro, wannabe punk. Don't try this at home *because you will never make it sound this good,* am I clear? Supremo nerdo punk bangers (times four) from Virginia with manic, screamed vokillz and a rapid-fire, no-nonsense approach to writing solid jams. For the record, though, the whole thing does sound like it was recorded in a bedroom with a drum machine…but a really good drum machine. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, animalplanetpunk.bandcamp.com)

**THE BEERTRAPS** – Bar punk. Pretty decent songs and a serious rock'n'roll edge with genre appropriate leads. TURBONEGRO, stuff like that. (Robert) (12-song CD-R, lyrics not included, beertraps@gmail.com)

**BICYCLE DAY** – I've never heard of this Oakland band, and this tape is good. It reminds me of a less urgent WIRE or GANG OF FOUR filtered through more of an indie rock lens…and recorded at home. Rather than slapping you in the face, it sets a mood and keeps you there. The vocals are languid and lazy but perfectly fit the tone of the band. Good tape. (Greg) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, digitalregress.bigcartel.com)

**BLACK MONUMENTS** – *II* – Out of tune, out of the box, carnival synth-punk that reminds me of SCREAMERS, THE FALL, and VEX with nightmarish vocals. It's all a little forced, but overall, BLACK MONUMENTS has a cool sound. Clamoring with heavy snare drum and loose strings, there are a few powerful live recordings at the end of the tape—the best part. (Jason) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, independentfries.com)

**BLOOD RUST** – Fast and straightforward hardcore punk. Baltimore's BLOOD RUST owe more to '90s east coast political punk (AUS ROTTEN, MANKIND?) than any modern trends— a forceful, manic, and fast (more than fast, it's fukkn off the rails*)* assault. (Robert) (10-song cassette, no lyrics, sphcrecords.bandcamp.com)

**THE BLOW INS** – Stunning collection of tracks from some Polish punks based in Ireland. Melancholic and forceful sounds rooted in tuneful East European punk and darker (but still defiantly *punk*) bands like EA80…this one just leaves me speechless. Undeniably infectious melodies, a slightly off kilter swagger, and simply perfect song construction. This one is necessary. (Robert) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, theblowins.bandcamp.com, jose3@wp.pl)

**THE BLUES** – *Vol 11* – The BLUES went on tour and put out this live tape with selections from a few random towns. The BLUES is a love song to the world sung through free jazz, skronk-fuck, forlorn downer vibes. Is it structured? Do they plan this out? I don't know. Guitar, sax, some yelps, and occasional thunderous drums collide in a train wreck. Fuck everything. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, thebluessingstheblues.org)

**CAGES** – *Complaint and Riots We Should Leave to Cats* – Low frequency, droning, arcade industrial tunes. My goodness, this is a really excellent experimental tape. Sort of *Twin Peaks*-ish, oozing with sadness and train-ride-like exploration. Reminds me of an old tape digital transfer I downloaded some years ago called *Stowaways Compilation*. CAGES sounds incredibly lonely, yet inclusive, with unique and powerful vocals that remind me of BJÖRK with the quiver of BRIAN ENO. Beautiful songs mixed with torment and independence, and beautiful silkscreen artwork. Half the band is a part of the abominable GAS CHAMBER of upstate New York. Try to get one of these 100 cassettes. (Jason) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, peterwalkeerecords@gmail.com)

**CHLOROFORM** – *Beg To Rise Up* – In an underground scene dominated by an apparent desire to be more tuneless, more aggressive, more confrontational, and more ferocious than the last band, it's strangely refreshing to press play and hear killer, well-crafted punk rock. It's simple, it's to the point…and it's recorded well, has sweeping guitar solos, has predictable melodies…and it's fukkn perfectly executed. Vocals are full of power and instantly addictive, and the songs here will take you back to the sharp and catchy punk that first made you realize that this is what you wanted to listen to for the rest of your life. A message to CHLOROFORM: *You did it*. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, runstatetapes.bandcamp.com)

**CLOACA** – The hardcore that ensues upon pressing play sounds so much like the Bay Area's NEEDLES that I'm initially concerned that the wrong tape has been placed in this handsome little screened and folded tape box. After the first few bars, blast-beats and other non-NEEDLES-like things appear, though the level of intensity does not drop. If Martin (of the aforementioned NEEDLES) had sung in SCHOLASTIC DETH, it may have sounded a lot like this. CLOACA is from Montreal and rips pretty hard. (Matt) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, karysun@gmail.com, socialcloaca.bandcamp.com)

**CUCUMBER AND THE SUNTANS** – *Accord Omní* – Tulsa garage pop band with a really creative approach to effects. They utilize them to create soundscapes rather than enhance what they're playing, like playing the effect rather than the instrument. Weird baroque approach to toy instruments (guitars, pianos, drums) making a pretty eclectic sound growing into baroque folk. Reminds me of the first few ANIMAL COLLECTIVE years. Nine songs that drone on, which can be kind of a snooze, like floating down a lazy river in an inner tube. They'll either exercise your brain or serenade you to sleep. (Michael) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, cucumberandthesuntans.bandcamp.com)

**FINAL ASSAULT** – *The Assault Continues!* – This is fast punk with echoey vocals on the newer stuff (side A). Side B is compilation of

older demos. The drummer hits the drum in a D-beat, and most of the songs start out on guitar or bass, and then the rest happens. The lyrics seem to touch on war and the brutality of governments. The cover features a figure in WWI helmet and gas mask. I'm telling you, WWI was pretty fucked up! (Mike) (18-song cassette, lyrics not included, soapandspikes.bigcartel.com)

**THE FLOOR ABOVE** – Every time I hear this band, they're a little different but no less exciting and vital. Seriously…I don't know what the fuck they're doing. The guitar is so out of tune on some songs but it sounds so cool. It's fucking desperate and tortured, but not hopeless. Each song blazes by at lightning fast speed, but manages to never fall into the trappings of banal hardcore idiocy. Sometimes, bands hear something cool and try to recreate it. Other times, bands just vomit out the weird shit inside of them as best as they can. This falls into the latter camp. Excellent. (Greg) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, notnormaltapes@gmail.com, cleplat@hotmail.com)

**GAS STATION OF LOVE / TAPE MONSTER** – *split* Two solo noise/punk projects sharing one plastic shell. TAPE MONSTER is overloaded and distorted manipulations of electronic sound with seemingly no direction; fans of being annoyed will be pleased. After opening with a chaotic drum machine driven metal number, GAS STATION OF LOVE have more of a "serial killer guy with a 4-track" feel, with tweaks and twists in sound that don't always connect. And then there's the acoustic guitar number ("Tranny Porn") and the electro track ("Space Pussy") to ensure that you know exactly what you are getting into on all levels. (Robert) (11-track cassette, lyrics not included, noblogofficial.blogspot.com

**GREASESTREAK** – *Starve For Me* – This is a total surprise because it looks like it's totally going to be the worst thing I had to listen to this month based purely on title and art, which includes an old-timey man forcing some kind of liquid down the throat of a boy in a homemade shirt with their pants half around their ankles while two other kids watch. Bogus, right? Turns out it's ripping hardcore punk. Who knew? Nothing mind-blowing, but 100% serviceable. The solo on "Odds Like These" is worth the listen alone. (Sean) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, elheiert@gmail.com, 4301 Leslie Avenue, Austin, TX 78721)

**HEX HAVEN** – This San Antonio quartet plays a fast and melodic style that makes me think of Denmark's ASSASSINATORS. While the ideas are there, the execution falls far below expectations when the instruments and vocals get out of sync. A couple songs have tuning issues as well as an overall lack of punch and energy. I think there's potential here if they could tighten things up and get a stronger and more confident sound. (Matt) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, glue1899@yahoo.com)

**HIP PRIEST** – *El Situation* – This guy is an intense drone, but not in a heavy way. He's making noise soundscapes with drenched vocals to keep it kind of spooky, so it's definitely a dark record that's going for that creepy vibe. Starts off really atmospheric and ambient and then a melody can be deciphered once beats are introduced under the sonic mass. Heavy synth, almost industrial, but without heavy beats as the backbone; it's like unstructured industrial mind fuck drone. The B-side is the A-side reversed. Whoa. (Michael) (20-song cassette, lyrics not included, woodyrecords.bigcartel.com)

**INTERNT OPPGJØR** – *6 Trakk Attakk* – Raw punk noisy chaos with snotty vocals from Oslo. At times it sounds like early Norwegian black metal recordings but with fart noises added and lots of crazed pogo beats. It also has the vibe of South American punk with some US metal riffage at the end. Solid tape. (Jason) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, interntoppgjoer.bandcamp.com)

**JAIL SOLIDARITY** – *Pretty Good Privacy* – JAIL SOLIDARITY hails from DC and plays sludge-tempo post-rock / post-hardcore with songs that usually teeter at the five-minute plus mark. The lyrics speak critically of the US government's obsession with heavy surveillance and the shitty rape culture that permeates our daily lives. It's intelligent, heavy, and beautifully executed. I know this would strike a chord with many of our readers because it is great in its own right, but this style of post-hardcore blurs past my mind without leaving a mark. Maybe I need the live setting to get it. Still, I can recognize that this is great music. Ex-members of BODY COP and MARY CHRIST. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, accidentalguest.bigcartel.com)

**JAPANESE FURNACE** – *I & II* – Chaotic and frustrated sounding hardcore / noise rock. Bass and guitar kinda blend together, and the whole presentation is off-putting (which is surely the intent) and manic (same). Two demos here, and the second from 2014 is much more cohesive, but still really grating in a good way. My only complaint is that the songs get lost in the awkwardness, but again, I think that's kinda the goal. Mission accomplished. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, $5ppd c/o 4131 Jacksonville Road, Trumansburg, NY 14886, primeruin.bandcamp.com)

**KOWABUNGA! KID** – I don't remember this band being this poppy before, but I've been known to be wrong. On this cassingle, the band throws out two quick, tight songs from an upcoming LP that recall straight-ahead melodic punk in the vein of EARTH GIRLS and maybe even THIS IS MY FIST. Short and sweet. (Greg) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, kowabungakid.bandcamp.com)

**LAYMAN** – *Blue Mind* – The bass guitar is pretty fuzzed out through most of this, yet the guitar is somewhat cleaner. The chorus effect is often added to all of this to the delight of many. The vocalist sounds most like Frances McKee of the VASELINES. The lyrics are quite poetic and skirt any direct meaning. I wouldn't say this group has solved the riddle of the '90s, but they are working on it. (Mike) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, laymanyl@gmail.com)

**LYSINE** – *Demonstration Tape* – This sounds like it's straight up from the Skin Graft Records basement! If that perks your ears up, then check out this new Oakland two-piece. Notes of BEEFHEART via '90s hardcore, pre-US MAPLE project SHORTY and St Louis heavy mathletes DAZZLING KILLMEN. Your stop to board the noise rock train. (Sean) (2-song cassette, forhealthyskin.bandcamp.com, lysineband@gmail.com, 498 25th Street Apt 21 Oakland, CA 94612)

**NEGATIVE SPACE** – Sharp-edged and off-kilter post-punk drawing on the likes of GANG OF FOUR, PYLON, and CRISIS, but more no wave. Sick. (Sean) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, graveimprint.com)

**NEGATIVE STANDARDS** – *Fetters* – Oakland's NEGATIVE STANDARDS have a *huuuuge* fucking sound…like a goddamn guitar tone that can move a mountain. This is a cassette release of an album that will be released sometime in the near (?) future, and it finds the band on top of their game. They seamlessly shift gears between doom dirges, blistering black metal, noise interludes, and total hardcore destruction without ever killing a vibe or losing any steam. The musicianship is unbelievably tight, and each song is nothing short of incredible. Completely destructive. Tapes come with a letterpressed cover and a small poster / lyric sheet. (Greg) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, negativestandards.bigcartel.com)

**PISTOFFICER** – *Get Out Of Power* – The music is (mostly) fast and brainless punk, and the vocals sound like some weird SPITS-esque cyborg-generated thing that make you stand up and wonder what the fukk is going on. Kenosha, Wisconsin stalwarts PISTOFFICER finished this disc before their singer died last year. A hard hitting metallic punk session is your final offering to the world? Well then, good for you, Frank. (Robert) (7-song CD-R, no lyrics, pistofficer.bandcamp.com)

**PLASTIC HEAP** – Aggro-weirdo hardcore from aggro-weirdos from Ohio somewhere in the neighborhood of MECHT MENSCH and WRANGLER BRUTES. Enough tuff mosh for the moshers, but never veers towards ignorance. The vocals are strong, leading the spastic guitar freak-outs and pounding rhythms, raging on topics like fat-shaming, gender dysphoria and the destruction of social capital. True mutant

freak music. (Sean) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, plasticheap.bandcamp.com, 1579 Indianola Ave., Columbus, OH 43201, USA)

**THE RAYGUNS** – *Never Been To California* – Instantly addictive ass-shaking punk that drips with '80s SoCal influence. ADOLESCENTS, VANDALS, DICKIES fans rejoice, but the RAYGUNS definitely don't sound dated. Rhythms are dirty, leads are crisp, and the vocals harmonize just like they are supposed to when singers know how to sing. (Robert) (7-song CD-R, lyrics not included)

**SCAMPS** – Some very passionate bar rock complete with barrelhouse piano and occasional harmonica. I wouldn't go so far as to say that it is BLUESHAMMER, but I might be in the minority. (Sean) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, scamps.bandcamp.com, scampsboston@gmail.com, 2 Guilford St., Allston, MA 02134, USA)

**SHITTY ROOMMATE** – Sometimes people (like me) will refer to something sounding like "the '90s" and it could mean grunge, shitty pop punk or (gasp!) emo. When I say this sounds like the '90s, I mean it sounds like gritty, melodic, Midwestern, basement punk in the vein of CLEVELAND SOUND DEATH SENTENCE or AMBITION MISSION. Two genders split the mic duties…both raspy and a little bit desperate in a comforting way. I have to admit that I was a little scared of their last song lasting five whole minutes, but it was so good that I didn't mind. It's good to see Detroit punks still holding it down. Great tape. I can't wait to hear more. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, $6ppd to Jessica-Rae Warren, 1326 Bagley St, 2R, Detroit, MI 48226, shittyroommatedetroit.bandcamp.com)

**SIEGE STOMPERS** – This is like *Blood Sweat and No Tears* reborn in Italy. It's not a rip off, but they nail the feeling I got the first time I hear that record, and the guitars in "Accepted Price" make me want to break everything. *EVERYTHING*. I mean, there's really not anything else to say except that this is good. Reallyfukkn good. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, siegestompers.bandcamp.com, siegestompers@gmail.com)

**THE $OFISTIFUCKS** – *We Fucking Hate It Here* – The $OFISTIFUCKS are trying to hurt you. Very intense driving hardcore that drones with repeating riffs that they absolutely beat into you. Growling vocals over surprisingly coherent guitars so that each go around lands every blow and it never dissolves into noise. You're definitely present for each hit. The last song repeats the line "We Fucking Hate It Here" for so long that I literally thought the tape was stuck and was looping. If you can last until the end you'll limp away with a sense of accomplishment. (Michael) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, thesofistifucks1.bandcamp.com)

**STRUL** – *Nu Blir Det Strul* – Full speed, raw, blown-out hardcore from Sweden. Raspy vox, buzzsaw guitars bashing out fist banging riffs and more than a healthy dose of shameless kång. The Swedes ain't afraid to rock, and these Swedes like it raw…I love this shit. (Robert) (11-song cassette, lyrics included, nublirdetstrul.blogspot.com, strul415@gmail.com)

**SUDDEN ATTACK** – Slam Anto D-beat for fucker. They have one half Schutzstaffel S, one anarchy A, and the VOID crosses in their logo so you know it's *punk*. I think there's a lyric that says "I DON'T CARE ABOUT EUROPEANS" which is a sentiment I can always back. A little of that DC hardcore in there for good measure. Slam on, slammers. (Sean) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, suddenattack.bandcamp.com, 8115 Royal Field San Antonio, TX 78255 USA)

**TECHNICAL ECSTASY** – Raw banging banger from New York. Snotty, belligerent, petulant, distorted, garage-y at times…and totally does not give two shits what this old ass man thinks about their band….but this old ass man likes them better when they ramp it down and spit some venom into garage punk conventions. (Don't get me wrong…that fast shit is good too, but what if those '90s bands on Shimmy Disc had listened to USHC and *liked* it?!?! I'm just saying.) This one hit a nerve, hit it right in the bullseye. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, $5ppd c/o 4131 Jacksonville Rd., Trumansburg, NY 14886, primeruin.bandcamp.com)

**THE TERMINAL FIVE** – *3X5* – The only comparisons I've been drawing on this are GRAY MATTER (composition) or GORILLA BISCUITS (vocally). It definitely has its pop influences. It's not exactly hardcore, but it somehow remains hardcore. It's a three-song demo, one about revenge, one about fear of being avenged, and one about being tormented by a phone operator. The band is tight, and everything is recorded well. The artwork is simple and pretty tasteful. I gave it two listens and it was well worth it. (Mike) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, theterminalfive.bandcamp.com)

**THE 39 STEPS** – *A Fake Smile is the Devil's Playground* – In the liner notes they stress that this was recorded three years ago in their hometown of Mexico City with a different lineup, so it's a moment in time that's gone. This is what skramz was trying to be before Hot Topic tainted it, but I haven't heard anything like this before. It's definitely powerviolence, but it unapologetically dips into indie rock and isn't afraid of sensitive riffs over blast beats. What keeps their credibility pure is the dual screaming / inhale growling vocals that never compromise, even during their sensitive moments. Instead of alienating both sides by attempting to mix the two genres they stack them on top of each other and let each end of the spectrum function purely. I've been listening to this tape non-stop since I got it. (Michael) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, losgrises.bandcamp.com)

**THE TRUANTS** – *60 Volts EP* – They're calling it "post-traumatic post-punk" that "comes with a healthy dose of queerness and a side of androgyny" and that's dead on. Lyrically they're covering a lot of heavy themes but in a way where it seems as if they've already come to terms with many of the hardships. That is to say, it seems to not be coming from a place of anger, but from a place of strength and acceptance. All this with jazzy phase-drenched guitars and bright dancey post-punk beats! This band is inexplicably catchy for the amount of trauma covered. This is once of the best pieces of music that I've heard this year. I'm so inspired. (Michael) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, facebook.com/thetruantsband, the-truants.bandcamp.com)

**TSA** – *2015* – This cassette really showcases how tight this band has become in the ten years that they've been together. Really well recorded so you can clearly hear the breakneck speeds with start-and-stop-on-a-dime tempo changes and heavy math breakdowns before catching and speeding into driving hardcore. You think it's going to fall apart until the last moment and then they drag you faster than comfort. The B-Side is a long free jazz noisescape to really keep you guessing. (Michael) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, badbadbadtsa.bandcamp.com)

**WHO & THE FUCKS** – *Porous* – They call it "Dumpster Surf." I call it "Landfill Surf." Another weird psych-y surf project with really simple digestible riffs and 'verbed vox to add to the pile. It ends with a ten-minute noise track which is pretty unnecessary, like they've got one last chance to be unique and weird but they just end up babbling. If you like this kind of music then you'll like this band just as much as you like the other bands in the landfill. (Michael) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, whoandthefucks.bandcamp.com)

**WILD ASSUMPTIONS** – *Edge Of My Shadow* – Guitars remind me of *Goo*-era SONIC YOUTH, vibe is straight early '90s college rock *(I'm talking the Homestead variety, for the nineteen readers to whom that might actually mean something)*, and the whole thing seems like it was constructed so mercifully far away from accepted punk customs. To phrase that sentence differently: Oakland's WILD ASSUMPTIONS play addictive moody mid-tempo punk fronted by stellar and slightly lilting female vocals. And both sentences mean that this band is really good. (Robert) (8-song cassette, no lyrics, wildassumptions.bandcamp.com)

**WORSE** – Total AmRep/Sub Pop worship… it's still weird when the sounds of your (my) early adulthood get reinterpreted by new and

current adults. My wife keeps saying that the vocals sound like COWS, and as much as I want to latch on to something more modern, at least something from this fucking *century*, she's right. She usually is. New York's WORSE play abrasive mid-tempo noise rock, but they are clearly well versed in hardcore, and when they blatantly channel SSD through that filter on "Come Together," the result is really, really good. Very good stuff. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, c/o 146 Norman Ave. Apt C, Brooklyn, NY 11222, worsenyc.bandcamp.com)

**YEAR OF DRAGON** – *Wine Into Water* – '90s alternative rock mixed with '90s radio grunge, but kinda wimpier than either. (Robert) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, yodnoise.bandcamp.com

**ZOTZ** – *Amargura* – A great offering from Mexico City's prime post-punk band! ZOTZ play cerebral, gothy post-punk, with catchy leads and riffs and despairing vocals in Spanish. They perfectly balance the dancey/dark ratio; the vocals aren't afraid to get heavy or aggressive—avoiding theatrical clichés—and the rhythm section is strong and emphatic. The effects on the bass and guitars give it all added atmosphere—deathpunk straight from the city streets with ample character. This release is more refined than some of their previous work, and the production is nicely consistent, making for a smooth ride through the nine tracks that fly by as swift as a bat in the night. Featuring members of MUERTE, DÍA FINAL and BRUJASS, this is top-notch stuff. For fans of KUUDES SILMÄ from Finland, HORROR VACUI from Italy, ERA OF FEAR from Greece, CADAVER EM TRANSE from Brazil and BELGRADO from Barcelona—yes, all current bands rocking the genre right now. (Lydia) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, Runstate Tapes, runstate.tapes@gmail.com, runstate-tapes.com)

**V/A** – *Bughouse I* – Not Normal is easily one of my favorite labels right now because they put out consistently exciting and engaging hardcore and punk. Even when I personally don't like a band on the label, I can usually appreciate them for what they're doing. *Bughouse I* is a collection of current, awesome punk bands from various parts of the world, but focuses primarily on the Midwestern US basement scene. Top excitement levels reached the boiling point upon hearing a new track by London's PRIMETIME. Their song "Strange Feeling" is just as good as anything off of their EP from last year. Also of note is sewer punk by Mississippi's BAGHEAD, the minimal basement synth of SLUGBUGS, some straight up SABBATH worship by FOGG, the total awesomeness of MYSTIC INANE, etc, etc…The BUG plays insanely tight fucking hardcore. What more do you want? TENEMENT? ORDEN MUNDIAL? CHUD? NEGATIVE SCANNER? They're all on there. This is easily the best compilation of current punk bands that I've heard in well over a year…maybe five years. (Greg) (38-song cassette, lyrics not included, notnormaltapes@gmail.com)

**V/A** – *Deep Secret Vol. 3* – A Burger Records comp of Texas bands, mostly psych and garage stuff that got me snoozing big time. Only tracks I really dug are SECRET PROSTITUTES, who you probably already know about, and Austin's CROOKED BANGS, whose track is astonishingly great. (Matt) (14-song cassette, lyrics not included, Burger Records, 645 S. State College Blvd. Unit A, Fullerton, CA 92831)

**V/A** – *No Stress* – This is a ten song CD-R compilation of mostly melodic punk from all over. For pure headboppin'. Standout track is the slightly Sam McPheeters-esque (but less clever or funny) "Tommy Crowbar Talks Edge Day," a two-minute long exercise of what sounds like an Australian human being doing a really bad Boston accent, which brings it back into funny territory. Oh, there's kind of a dour folk punk dirge here, too. CHRONIC SEIZURE launches a pretty good SIEGE imitation for a half song. PINK EYES and VENOM LORDS offer a distinct change of pace with their post-hardcore guitar explorations. (Sean) (10-song 3" CD-R, lyrics not included, undercomm.org)

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# ZINES

*Send zines for review to:*
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San Francisco, CA 94146

**Reviewers:**
(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(BW) Brendan Wells
(DG) Dan Goetz
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EC) E. Conner
(EW) Eli Wald
(GA) Grace Ambrose
(JB) Julia Booz
(JD) Justin Davisson
(JM) Jeff Mason
(MM) Marissa Magic

**ARTCORE #34**
**£6 / 48 pgs**
Happy 30th anniversary to Scotland's *Artcore* fanzine. The best most people can hope for at age 30 is to still be able to eat solid food—consistently issuing a solid hardcore zine is a certain accomplishment. Among the most interesting features here may be "Jam the Controls: Killed By New Wave in Post Punk America," an exhaustive seven page treatment of some of America's uglier music of the late '70s and early '80s. There's a feature on NYC peace punk from Freddy Alva and one on the art of Randy "Biscuit" Turner featuring a nice spread of his flyers, album art, and collage work. The all-male interviews section features Tau Cross, Oi Polloi (who also appear on a split with Grand Collapse featured with this zine), Dry Heaves, Pillage, Finland's Maailmanloppu, and Sorry State Records. Common themes: confronting nationalism and racism in Europe and the UK, introductions to punk, and the challenge of finding five punk records that define you. The zine also includes a four-page reviews section. Not a bad zine to pick up, whether you've been reading this since 1986 or 2016. Oh yeah—Steve Miller from the Fix offers up an enthusiastic interview towards the end. If you are a psychopath like me who has ever wanted to read Steve's rig rundown, send £6 to... (EW)
artcorefanzine.co.uk

**CEMETERIES**
**$4 or trade / 28 pgs**
If you live in a big city, sometimes the most accessible green spaces are where we bury the dead. This is true almost world-wide! What's also true is that we, the freaks, like to surround ourselves with the kind of animosity that only dead people buried in the ground can provide. Nicole has put together some really lovely reviews of her favorite cemeteries in the country. All benefit from candid retellings of her time spent there—who she was with and what drugs they did are all detailed. It's morbid and sweet, just like the people you wish you were hanging out with! (EC)
953 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11205

**COMMUNICATING VESSELS #27**
**donation / 36 pgs**
I'm a fan of reviving olden printing techniques as much as the next guy. Still, at this point, we have to admit the commodification of the aesthetic. I'm not trying to say it's ruined or completely inaccessible, but it is a niche fetish at best. Nevertheless, it's a beautiful niche fetish. This mag has been putting out issues for a while now, and while I always enjoy holding the work and admiring its form, the content is sometimes less than stunning. It seems like, along with the idealization of technology, this homie also likes to hold on to romantic notions of the less-than-pristine process of hammering in the importance of classical philosophy. If this weren't coupled with romantic poetry and platitudes about Shakespeare, all while demeaning the more modern and endlessly important practice of deconstructing (not demeaning) these concepts, I would maybe be more inclined to fuck with it harder. Still, hate for cops is a good commonality, and I'm happy to share it with anyone. (EC)
PO Box 2048, Tuscon, AZ 85702

**EAST BAY PUNK ZINE #2**
**14 pgs**
A *lot* of Misfits content in this zine, assembled by the East Bay Punk Club out of CSU Hayward. Well, at least two Misfits things. There is an interview here with the Crimson Ghosts, a band that does surf covers of Misfits songs. The interviewer actually heard the cover band before even hearing the Misfits, which I thought was funny until I realized that my first exposure to the Dead Kennedys was an instrumental version of "Police Truck" featured in *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater.* There's a nice write-up of a Drinks show (members of White Fence, Cate le Bon, the Nerve Agents) at the Rickshaw Stop. I'm not sure if their record is reviewable (i.e. "punk enough") by *MRR* standards, but I'm glad someone went to that show and reported back. This issue concludes with a short exposition of early garage punk. Someone at CSU Hayward should write a grant to get them a set of *Back From the Grave* comps for the clubhouse. (EW)
eastbaypunkclub@gmail.com

**#ERRORMESSAGES #1**
**$2 / 28 pgs**
This is a densely packed compilation of previously published essays regarding technology and capitalism and the ways in which it has and will destroy us. There's commentary interspersed, linking all of the pieces together. It's interesting, terrifying, and aesthetically pleasing. (MM)
PO Box 170371, San Francisco, CA 94117

**GENERAL ADMISSION MUTT #1**
**$4 / 50 pgs**
This thing is lengthy and has a lot of filler. It's worth perusing more for the occasional snark and humorous bits— the obviously fake Dave Grohl e-mails, Smokey the Bear with a blunt in his mouth, the NYC vanity plate that says "I VAPE," etc.. About half of the girth is record and show reviews that are lengthy but funny, in-depth and sometimes personal without being self-indulgent. The irreverent cut-and-paste layout is great and matches a lot of the mouthy tone, but the color copy job look like shit. Sorry. (DG)
PO Box 9, New York, NY 10034 / gamutt.storenvy.com

**IRELANDS' ZINE HISTORY PART 1**
**$5 / 40 pgs**
Compiled by Anto of *Loserdom*, some of this had appeared in older issues of his zine, but this is the first installment of the material complied together. He looks at punk zines—the earlier science-fiction zines are outside the scope of this project. The format is a mix of reprints, write-ups/reviews, and interviews with the creators today. The best punk history is in zines, so reading the originals would really be tapping the source. The limitations of oral history are an issue with the interviews, as happens every time you ask somebody

what they thought twenty years back, but these do add some context and additional information. The editor was unable to dig up any zines made by women so work remains to be done. For me, this was a great read that broadened my limited understanding of Irish punk history. A note enclosed with the zine says you can get this and the most recent *Loserdom* together for $5. (JM)
loserdomzine@gmail.com / Anto, 3 Crestfield, Youghol, Co. Cork, IRELAND

**JUST FILE UNDER PUNK #1**
**free / 8 pgs**
A brief entry out of Melbourne. The author says they had originally set out to do a nostalgia zine but changed their mind—for the better, I think. The zine starts off with a rant about pop culture appropriating punk fashion. It may be a little tongue in cheek, but it also comes off as a bit curmudgeonly ("every fucker now has piercings all over, from disco dicks to hip hop gang bangers"). There are also two gig reviews, from July 1979 all the way to October 2015. This is the first zine from someone after a long time in punk—never a bad time to start, is there? The layout is a little rough on the eyes, but a lot of the elements here are quite cool. If issue #2 arrives, there's a promise for some more archival material—looking forward to what comes next. (EW)
No return address listed: "manually (literally) distributed in Melbourne, Australia."

**KERBLOOM #117**
**$3 / 12 pgs**
*Scabiesssssss*! A punk trope, if there ever was one! Still! It's a real and curable hazard and comes with its fair share of anxiety. Artnoose explores her romps in the land of communicable parasites and the toxins you fuck with to rid yourself of them. *All that with a letterpress and a baby, too*! Like a lot of these diseases, scabies would probably best be treated with some common sense and real and practical medical advice. Hey, it's easy to freak out about, but it's also really easy to get rid of. Stay safe out there. (EC)
artnoose@yahoo.com / 2480 5th St, Berkeley, Ca 94710

**LOSERDOM #24**
**$5 / 72 pgs**
"DIY punk zine," it says on the cover. I read quite a bit of this before I came across material which fully fits this description. Now with two young children, Anto's moved away from the city to a small town in the southeast of Ireland. He can't bike everywhere anymore, and he writes of his new relationship with the auto. Pages are devoted to thrift shopping, his relationship with road kill (!), and the green message in an old kids' cartoon. He looks at how different mainstream newspapers covered the past summer's invasion of Gaza by Israel. Filmmaker and animator Alan Holly is interviewed. His short film took two years to produce, where he stayed in and stared at a screen until he was wan and weary. The wonderfully ugly head of punk finally rears in the interview with Clodagh Murphy of (to just name her current projects) Burnchurch (sick name, yo) and *The Parish Punk* (reviewed below). She lives in the southeast as well, so they get into the changes of being away from the action in the city. A bunch of gigs get reviewed, and for me, the whole zine is worthwhile for the write-up of the Gaze / Korp show in a garage in Co. Tipperary. Seven (!) pages of zine reviews close it out. They're mostly Irish zines, but some are from Europe and a few from the US. He tried to order the new Cometbus book, and the publisher told him to get it from [a super-shitty Seattle-based everything store you should never patronize], and he did! Well, it ends on a bad note, and it's more a look at Anto's life than full-on punk rock, but don't let my criticisms drive you off. For me, there was a lot to like here. It's huge and engaging—a personal zine in the good sense of the term. For the price he'll include a copy of *Irelands' Zine History Part One*, reviewed above. (JM)
loserdomzine@gmail.com / Anto, 3 Crestfield, Youghol, Co. Cork, IRELAND

**LOW LEVEL #3**
**$2 / 30 pgs**
I get the impression that this person takes inspiration from Hunter S. Thompson, Aaron Cometbus, and a male creative writing teacher, among others. The stream of consciousness format jumps around from subject to subject—some personal, some unnecessarily observational, some elongated factual anecdotes whose relevance isn't made clear, and "Places I've Slept." If the lists in the back are any indication, this person has questionable taste in music and better taste in zines. (DG)
417 Elm Ave, North Wales, PA 19454

**LOW LEVEL #4**
**$2 / 38 pgs**
Except for those at the beginning, the stream of consciousness stories are shared by guest writer Wette Blanchette this time around, and they are a bit more interesting. There are also shotgun interviews with people who do music and zines about their favorite places to eat, drink, and trip in cities they've lived, which was a real treat to read. The author of this zine has a great eye for design, making good use of found artwork and a photocopier. (DG)
417 Elm Ave, North Wales, PA 19454

**MEN ARE FROM MARS, WOMEN NEED TO STAY OFF THAT SPACE DICK**
**$4 /10 pgs**
As you can tell just from the title, Janelle Hessig has composed an instructive, morals-exempt comic in the long important tradition of the cautionary tale, except in her version, she doesn't have to either die or get married. Thank goodness! This is the preview of her comic collection *Rotten Philosophies*, that we will have to wait another year to read. I'd wait a thousand years, it's so worth it. She keeps it the realest. This story is about internet dating, and it is both confessional and educational in its scope, even though it is only ten pages long. You'll get many lessons from re-reading. It begins with the epiphany, in getting out of a series of long term relationships, of not needing to tend to someone else's problems. She then lists bad habits to avoid, one featuring the awareness of the Blarg Hierarchy of Needs, with her version of the Food Pyramid, Art being at the base (the most important) and Bootay somewhere near the top. She goes on to share reflections on how it's not so bad, sometimes even fun, if you keep in mind that you're #1 and don't fall for any bullshit or rules. I can't pick, but a favorite is the rendering of the mutant "worst human ever" who both cries and tries to take the condom off, while being married and racist. How can you squeeze god finger, TMNT, apes and robots into so small a space? Oh, oh, oh, the drawings. She synthesizes it all into bursts of clarity, every frame brimming with insights and hilarity. It's not even that she has it all figured out, it's more about making fun of "it." Thank you, Janelle, I wish I could wake up every morning with a deep thought anywhere near the magic wisdom of yours-es. (JB)
janelleblarg@hotmail.com or c/o Last Gasp, 777 Florida Street, San Francisco, CA 94110 / gimmeaction.com

**NEUROTIC AND NAUSEATED #2**
**$2 / 28 pgs**
This zine reminds me of *Asswipe* in a lot of ways, but maybe it leans a little more toward the confessional side of things. It's very teenage in a bragging about being a drunk punk and how fuuuucking badass that is kind of way. It postures and emotes about stuff that, once you cease being twenty, is just kind of whatever and maybe slightly embarassing. It's cool that this person is making a zine, and I hope they continue making it past this phase of things. (MM)
ali-trashcan.tumblr.com

**NOT LIKE YOU #5**
**$4 / 38 pgs**
This New Mexico zine consists of interviews with Detroit skate punks Stale Phish, old punk and pro skater Bill Danforth, DOA, a reprint of what may be the final Warzone interview, and the short part-two of the Ian MacKaye interview that began in the last issue. The continuation of the Ian interview is a great conclusion, and I enjoyed the shooting the shit about the old days tone with Bill Danforth. The record reviews are decent, the layout is fairly plain but does the job, and the photos are well reproduced. (DG)
102 Richmond Ave SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106 / notlikeyourecords.com

**OLD DOMINO**
**£12 / 52 pgs**
This is a lovely little high-quality photo book documenting some of the music and art scenes surrounding the Domino Sugar Refinery in Williamsburg before the area was rezoned. Mostly photos of the factory, punk bands, art installations, and drunken show-goers. This is probably an absolute must-have for locals, and I'd be honored to have this as a punk coffee table book (if I had a coffee table), but nothing stood out as crucial, exciting, or desperate, and I bet it was all of those things and more. Short and sweet. (DZ)
brownowlpress.com

**THE PARISH PUNK #3**
**2 pgs**
This free paper folds out pretty big and goes in deep regarding some of the best Ireland has to offer. Much of it is nature-friendly, like the pieces on sea swimming and hiking the Comeragh mountains. The Parish Punk Compound got some hens from an animal rescue, and they learned what "free-range" really means—the birds looked bad when they got 'em. They offer advice for people who eat animals to do so more responsibly. A campaigner for the Marriage Equality vote (which passed handily) writes on why they participated and what's next. "I especially don't understand why marriage has been treated as the end goal of the LGBTI rights movement." Like everywhere, Ireland still has a long way to go. Closing it out are show and event listings and an easy mead recipe. Pretty sweet. (JM)
theparishpunk@riseup.net

**THE RE(A)D ZONE #27**
**20 pgs / French and English**
Mainly made up of four interviews, *The Re(a)d Zone* writes the intros in French, then asks questions to the bands in English. A defunct British band tells of their diverse influences, but it seems the editor didn't know too much about them, as some of the questions aren't relevant to their experiences. A simple talk with the Oppressed emphasizes their anti-fascist/anti-racist/radical sentiments; likewise with the twenty-year-old Ecuadorian radical band Retaque who talk about their local scene and band history. There is a piece on publishing company Artus Films who feature "B to Z movies" as well as film books. This one has the intro in English and the discussion in French. A French-language piece recommends some zines, books, and hip-hop, I think. The zine isn't too in-depth, but I'm glad I saw the Retaque interview, at least. (JM)
Saul Essame, 109 Rue Victor Hugo, 37000 Tours, FRANCE

**RICE HARVESTER #14**
**28 pgs / $2 or trade (mixtape, not zine)**
In very literal terms, the latest and last issue of *Rice Harvester* (edited by Greg Harvester, an *MRR* contributor, from 1996 until now) includes show reviews, a rundown of prior issues of the zine, an essay about moving away from New Orleans, and a long interview with John Geek about the (510) BAD-SMUT hotline (another punk resource hitting its twentieth anniversary this year). More than that, though, this zine is an engagement with grief and trauma. RIPs dot these pages with arresting regularity, and the New Orleans essay is really about returning to a site of life-threatening violence. It is a gut wrenching, uncompromising, and intensely personal piece, never reaching a comfortable resolution (an unreasonable but still frequent demand a lot of people have around trauma narratives). The BAD SMUT interview is probably the longest piece in the zine. The interview discusses the hotline's origins as a project of necessity for punks who were somehow just off the edge of the Bay Area in the 1990s (as punk was going platinum) yet still in the middle of nowhere, unable to crack into institutions like Gilman or *MRR*, let alone get a ride to shows. *Rice Harvester* demonstrates that even something like this answering machine have complex histories of their own; hard to pin down, uncomfortable, unpredictable. I can go on and on—as sad as it is to see the end of the zine, this is one that demands obsessive re-reading, a truly rewarding composition..(EW)
Rice Harvester c/o Greg, PO Box 40786, San Francisco, CA 94140 / remoteoutposts@gmail.com / remoteoutposts.bigcartel.com

**RIOT 77 #18**
**52 pgs / 5 euros**
At first, I was like, "Why is every band in here reformed fuckin' twenty-five years

later?" but then I realized it's *Riot* 77, not *Riot Today*. Still, I can't give a fuck about yesterday's heroes playing the hits. A prime example is the ugly New Yorker on the cover, Paul Bearer of Sheer Terror. The band put out one good LP (well, I think so) in 1990, signed with fucking MCA, and that should've been the end of it. Yet here he is, talking about the band, the new LP, and of course, the old days. He's known as an entertaining interview, and here he's asked to what extent he stands behind the views expressed in the infamous *Suburban Voice* interview of yesteryear. They lacked the foresight to buy property on the Lower East Side, he says. If you were wondering about his days as a Nazi skin in NYC and San Francisco, he makes light of it, saying they just liked fighting, getting drunk and being despised. So if they queer bashed you, well, you know how kids are, right??? Why run this shit at all, never mind give him the cover. The Outcasts get asked about their first show in Dublin in 1979. Like they remember! Well, they do discuss their more middle-class upbringing and how the story that most of the copies of their first single were destroyed in a car bomb is untrue. There are eighteen months of show reviews, mostly Dublin, but some New York as well. A broad range of styles are covered, but there are very few bands who aren't well past their prime. The magazine is huge, so there are relevant insights and some cool shit scattered throughout. The best bands exist now, so this whole focus comes off as weak to me. If this is your jam, it's thick here, but I doubt you're reading *MRR*. (JM)
riot77magazine@hotmail.com / PO Box 11342, Dublin 2, IRELAND

**SOMETHING FOR NOTHING #72**
**stamps for postage / 36 pgs**
This is my first foray into this apparently long running zine, and I hope it's not my last. I can see how this might fly under the radar for most, but start talking about the importance of goof in your punk bands, vegan food, weird reggae *and* hardcore, and I'm gonna check out what your weird ass has to say. Aside from discussing, at length, the entire catalog, album-by-album, of the DICKIES and TOY DOLLS, there are zine, book, and weirdo soda reviews, and a million tiny rants. I only have one complaint: The back page has a huge photo of Betty White with a large caption that reads "WHITE POWER." Yeah, I get it, it's fucking hilarious, but I don't really wanna even joke about that bullshit. Anyway, yeah, I fucking like this zine. (DZ)
Idy, 516 Third Street NE, Massillon, OH 44646

**$PARE ¢HANGE #33**
**$2 / 40 pgs**
Last night at the show somebody was trying to take a picture of a guy and he slapped the phone out of his hand and it landed on the stage, at which point the singer picked it up and inspected it while still singing, shrugged, and put it in his back pocket. I thought at first he was actually just like "who texted me?" while in the middle of a chorus. I loved it and I hated it but I felt indifferent when I discovered the truth, that he was trying to be a good Samaritan and gather up the bullshit that ends up on the stage. This is 2016, and *Spare Change* is the opposite of all this. It's reaching for you, looking to spread human connection with a tiny brush, picking up the intricacies and hoping someone else will also notice the meaning in the details. It's one of my cherished favorites. This issue he comes back around to a narrative style, (part six of a story called "The Road Away From Home") as opposed to the past few that have been odd observations and haikus. Foote is above all an observer, and one who finds cutting truths in his interpretations. This story takes place when he was still a kid, dealing with the issues of curfews, destructive parties, and handling oneself while wasted. There are a lot of moments about being unsure about what to do with his life, at the age when that still matters. Of course, I especially like the parts on early love and heartbreak: "She was on different drugs than I was. We grew apart," and the descriptions of being on acid and seeing people's skin as perforated paper, while the ceiling fans spit letters and incomprehensible words at him. He thanks the powers of the cosmos in his thanks list. Just sayin'. (JB)
PO Box 6023, Chattanooga, TN 37401

**THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #136/137**
**$3.25 / 64 pgs**
Your favorite Midwest one-man-army music zine is at it again. A double issue this time with plenty of show reviews, interviews, and brief political tirades. It seems this guy goes to every show in the area, and if we view the project from higher ground, it could seem like he's building his life story through the process of review, which is a cool fucking project. (EC)
PO Box 1444, Columbia, MO 65205

**WASTED OPPORTUNITIES #10**
**$3.50 / 58 pgs**
If you are like me—and in this case I really hope you are—you are dismayed as shit by how many otherwise DIY punk bands are choosing to sell or give themselves to *Noisey* and how little questioning of this seems to be happening by people who should know better. This zine's thorough explanation of the Vice Media brand and how it uses subcultural raw materials to generate advertising revenue is an important piece of work, along with the amusing illustrations of punks draped in dollar signs and a "News Corp" shirt. While there was no talk of *Vice* mag founder Gavin McInnes' politics—and it is not an exaggeration to say that they're only minimally distinguishable from those of Donald Trump (who McInnes has also publicly endorsed)—or how the Vice brand was built on "ironic" racism, gender essentialism, and, in particular, Islamophobia that was never ironic to begin with, I can understand this not being covered, as McInnes no longer has any stake in Vice Media. Other than that, the interviews with Night Birds and the Lippies from Grand Rapids are worthwhile and seem to be informed but also do a good job of asking questions that fill in the blanks. I could do without the ode to Propagandhi, as that band is the musical equivalent of children's vitamins, but the reviews do a good job of making you want to check out the records without really describing what they sound like, which is honestly not a jab. (DG)
wastedoppszine.storenvy.com

**WHEN DEADLINES BECOME ZOMBIES #10**
**28 pgs**
This collection of poetry and artwork is an outlet for trauma processing. In the past, the author was stuck in situations where too much shit had to be taken. The different characters here express various aspects of being hurt, getting better, and envisioning revenge. Writing, illustrations, and sculptures describe the resulting feelings without going into specifics of the abuse. Some of the pages are full color, and the art ranges from simple sketches to bright and elaborate pieces. I think this would mostly be of interest to people who use similar coping and survival strategies. (JM)
zfthrimej@gmail.com / Jeff Ramirez, 186 Parc Place Drive, Milpitas, CA 95035

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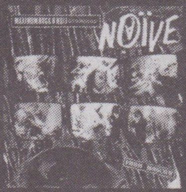

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